

Somali Voices in Glasgow City: Who Speaks? Who Listens? An Ethnography

Emma Hill

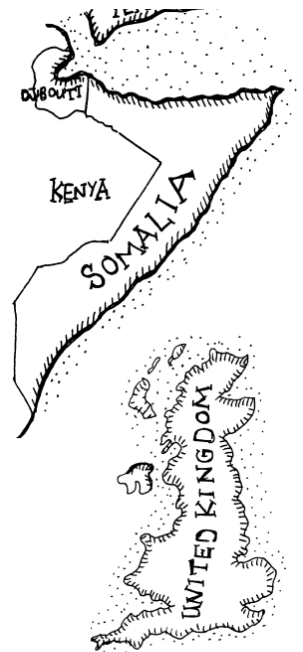
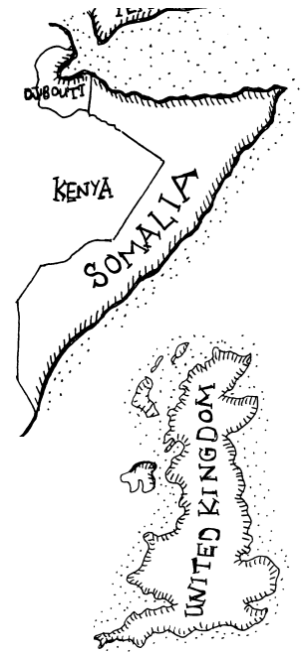
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Abstract

Somali people have lived continuously in Glasgow since the early 2000s. Having faced the challenging circumstances of Dispersal, subsequent social inequalities, and a fast-changing political climate, the population is now part of Scotland's multicultural society. However, despite this success, many Somali people do not feel that the population 'has voice' in Glasgow. As seventeen-year-old Duniya comments, 'it's like we're hidden down, under the table, we are seen, but nobody knows what we're about'.

Based on two years' of ethnographic fieldwork with Somali groups and individuals in Glasgow, this thesis considers the extent to which Somali people (do not) 'have voice' in Glasgow. It finds that Somali people's communicative experiences are strongly grounded in practices and infrastructures of community, and often a combined result of 'internal' and 'external' approaches to the concept. First, considering the contribution of Somali cultures of 'voice' to Somali people's experiences in the city, I argue that, due to the particular way in which a Somali community has developed in Glasgow, people's vocal experiences have been characterised by a complex combination of cohesion and fragmentation. Second, considering the impact of 'external' approaches to 'voice' in Scotland upon Somali experiences, I identify three areas - 'community development' infrastructure, the news-media and constructions of public spaces - which place limitations on Somali people's belonging, citizenship and 'voice' in Scotland. Moreover, I suggest, the impact of these 'external' approaches to 'voice' on 'internal' vocal practices serve only to compound existing communicative inequalities. In the context of the current political climate, in which concern for people's citizenship, belonging and voices is particularly heightened, I echo Somali people's calls for increased dialogue between

communities to consider the communicative inequalities that have so far been unaddressed.

For the Somali individuals and groups in Glasgow with whom I worked.

Thank you, mahadsanid, شكرًا

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Part 1: Introduction

This research ends in times significantly different to those in which it began. When, in 2013, I first conceived the idea of a project about Somali ‘voices’ in Glasgow, many of the events that have had a so significant social and political impact on the 2010s had not yet occurred. Some – such as the prospect of a Referendum on Scottish Independence – were possible to anticipate. Others – such as the eventual closeness of the Scottish vote in 2014, the crisis in the Mediterranean, the rise of the populist and far right across Europe, the increase of extremist attacks in the West, a UK Referendum on EU membership and the subsequent ‘Brexit’ result, and the election of Donald Trump to the US Presidency – were less so. In 2013, my research was concerned with how Somali people experienced the complexities of culture, place and communication in a devolved Scotland, and in a post-migration context. Over the last five years and as a result of global events, these themes – of belonging, of migration, of borders (both within and outside of the UK) of political and public participation, of culture, citizenship and ‘voice’ – have become more complex and come under increased scrutiny.

In Europe, responses to the ongoing catastrophe in the Mediterranean have crystallised into physical and ideological borderlines. Alongside isolated responses of political compassion to the crisis, attitudes to immigration have hardened, and dog-whistle racism has become normalised. People of migrant or minority backgrounds, people of colour and the working classes are increasingly being positioned to take the blame for widespread social inequalities, whilst also bearing the brunt of the very same conditions. Often, Somali people have been directly caught up in these responses. In

the context of the EU Referendum, right-wing, populist movements mobilised and combined anti-migrant and anti-Muslim discourses with increasing fervour. In the aftermath of increased extremist attacks both in the UK and in Europe, Muslims particularly have been made the subjects of enhanced securitisation. Somalis are one of the seven majority-Muslim populations on which Donald Trump's travel ban has had global impact. If in the early 2010s, Somali people living in Glasgow faced social, cultural, structural and discursive inequalities, in the late 2010s, they face them in magnified form.

Throughout the political and social upheaval of the last five years, norms of democratic and social engagement have been tested and realigned. To varying extents, those in power have moved away from progressive approaches. Often, in the context of questions about 'voice', borders and belonging, it has felt as if the centre of gravity has shifted, and discussions about social exclusion that once were outside the norm have become normative. Throughout my research, the scope, scale and orientation of questions about 'voice' – and especially questions about Somali 'voices' – have therefore come under increasing pressure and change. However, though the social, political and communicative landscape may have significantly altered since the start of this thesis, it does not mean that its original questions are now irrelevant. Rather, in times where concepts of citizenship, borders, belonging – and crucially, 'voice' – are being placed under increasing pressure, its questions, approaches and priorities are all the more urgent.



Figure 1.1: Scotland's voices. (Own) photograph taken at a pro-EU demonstration in 2016, following the Brexit vote.

1.1 Seen but not heard? Somali voices and Glasgow City

The 2014 Referendum on Scottish Independence saw an unprecedented level of engagement from voters in Scotland. For the Somali community in Glasgow, it was no different: the topic brought discussion and debate, groups were formed for 'Yes' and for 'No', and people across generations went out to vote. However, as much as the Referendum was about Scotland's future (Scottish Government, 2014c), for many Somali people it also brought a chance to reflect on the past and the population's complex provenance and position in Scotland. Though small numbers of Somali people had lived in Scotland for decades, the contemporary Somali population's roots in Glasgow began in the early 2000s. Brought initially to Glasgow under New Labour's 'Dispersal Scheme', by 2014 the population had grown out of its precarious origins to form a settled and sizeable group. However, though the population was settled, this did not mean the experiences of those who were part of the population were the same; nor did it mean the community was monolithic or without difference. Variations in positions, experiences and opinions were made particularly visible by the 2014 Referendum. For some, it brought anxiety at the prospect of being cut off again from family in other parts of the UK; others were concerned at the potential loss of a valuable British passport. Some saw the vote as an opportunity: to build on the networks of solidarity and change already present in Scotland and to build a society untethered from UK institutions and politics. Others heard faint echoes of the Somalia/Somaliland independence debate and wondered about the comparative context.

Social relationships, infrastructure and connections were also being exercised. Though groups in support of 'Yes' and 'No' were formed within the community, they reflected existing social infrastructure to which not everyone had the same degree of

access. In the meantime, Somali links to the wider campaigns were tentative. Though there were groups that looked to represent respective African and Muslim interests in the Referendum, many felt that they did not speak to Somali experiences. Furthermore, where the headline campaigns sought to mobilise ideas about belonging in the UK in different ways, some Somalis expressed unease at how this might crystalise in racial, religious and national terms. Caaliyah, a Somali contributor to this thesis who lived in Glasgow throughout her teens and early twenties, remembers the period as an unusual one. She considered herself to be fairly politically active, and tried to be involved in the lead up to the Referendum. However, though she talked about the Referendum with family and friends, she did not identify with the Somali groups formed for the campaign. Nor did she quite identify with the wider debate:

I was very involved, on a personal level and ... it was such a great atmosphere and everything, but at the same time it was weird because that's one of the very few times that I've felt like almost like I don't have a right to be part of it ... you know what I mean?

Caaliyah certainly had a 'voice' in the Referendum debate. Before the vote, she was actively involved in some local campaign events where she shaped the conversation; on the day of the vote, she cast her ballot and 'voiced' her opinion on the topic. However, at the same time that she had a 'voice', she also felt that she did not: distanced from Somali-run groups, and without representation or access to the wider campaigns, she found herself in the unusual position of not 'having voice' whilst also 'having voice'. The experience highlighted to her the importance she placed upon her 'voice' in her everyday life in Glasgow. She comments,

I feel that I do have a voice and I need to do something, though I don't know what it's going to achieve [...]

And that's what I try and encourage, I always try and say to other people they have a voice they can use it, if they care about something they can do it and speak up, it might not be easy but it will be worth it in the end

For Caaliyah, the environment of the Referendum made visible the complexities of being Somali and being part of 'the community' in Glasgow that usually remain un(der)identified. The context of the Referendum highlighted some of the sites, practices and priorities of community and communication not only within the Somali population but also in the wider contexts of Glasgow and Scotland. Crucially, for Caaliyah – as for many people of Somali heritage in Glasgow – the Referendum also highlighted 'voice' as an integral part of being a citizen. But this did not mean that all experiences of citizenship and 'voice' were the same. Rather, in the environment of the Referendum, 'voice' meant many different things. It was a vote: a declaration of one's democratic citizenship; citizenship itself. It was representation: not only the inclusion of one's interests in public debates, but the inclusion of oneself in the debate. It was being part of a community, or many 'communities', and of negotiating the discussions and dialogue across and within them. It was having access to community narrative(s) and shaping their content and direction. It was language, action and vocal expression. It was belonging and 'being there' (Cavarero, 2005, p. 173).

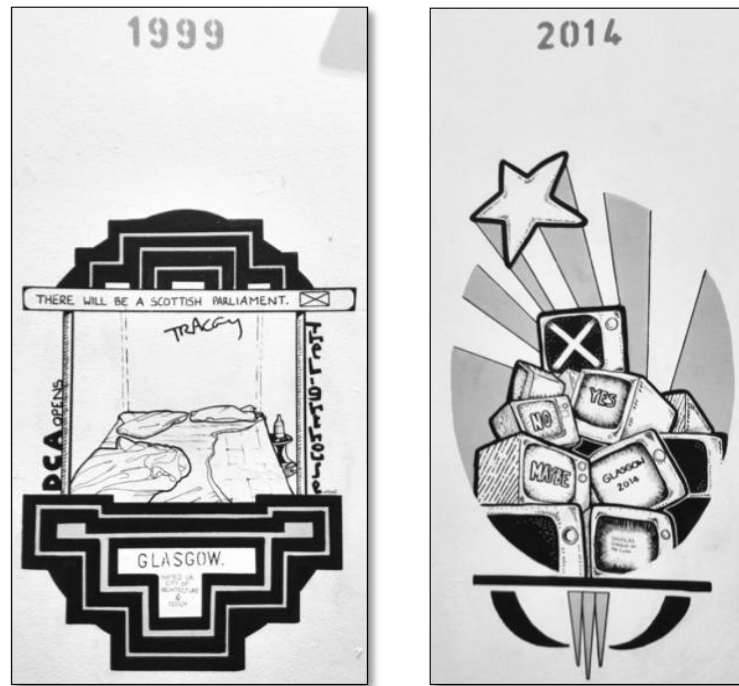


Figure 1.2: Stencils in the viewing gallery of the Gallery of Modern Art (Glasgow) marking events in Scotland between 1999 and 2014 (Own photographs: May 2014)

1.1.1 Introducing the research

Somali people's experiences of the 2014 Referendum were contradictory, overlapping and intersecting, connected to norms and negotiations of belonging, community and citizenship. Frequently, their experiences could be associated with different 'species' (Perec, 1997) of 'voice': of moments of 'having voice', moments not 'having voice' and moments in between. Their experiences of the 2014 Referendum were grounded in the political and social environment of the time; however, many of the vocal complexities made visible by the environment speak to experiences of (not) 'having voice' in contexts beyond the Referendum. Amongst the Somali population, social and cultural norms continue to inform practices and infrastructures of community that shape Somali people's communicative experiences in Glasgow. In the more general environment of the city, institutional structures and public discourses place limits on the extent to which Somali people are 'imagined' (Anderson, [1983] 2006) as part of 'the community', and

condition the terms in which they might ‘speak’. Together, ‘internal’ infrastructure and ‘meta’ (Netto, 2008, p. 59) expectations of community combine in ways that at times enhance and at others inhibit Somali voices.

In this context, this thesis is interested in the extent to which Somali people and people of Somali heritage living in Glasgow (do not) ‘have voice’ in the city. In the last five years, the politics of two Referenda, two General Elections and one Scottish Election(!) have seen ‘voice’ evolve into a particularly loaded term, associated with democratic process, the ‘will of the people’ and bordered determinations of belonging. Glasgow’s Somali population inhabits so many cross-bordered belongings in this environment; as a result, the question of ‘voice’ – whose voice? With what limits? On whose terms? – has repeatedly risen to the surface. In the meantime, after fifteen years of living in Glasgow, the Somali population could now readily be considered part of Scotland’s (multicultural) ‘community of communities’(Parekh, 2000); however, as seventeen year-old Duniya observed to me, it remains ‘hidden down... like, under the table; it’s like we’re seen, but people don’t know what we’re about, you know?’ (see Part 3.1). I use these two points – of an environment in which conditions of ‘voice’ are heightened, and of Somali experiences of the potentials and limits of ‘voice’ in Scotland – as initial points of departure for this thesis. My first set of questions focuses on practices of community and communication amongst Somali people in Glasgow. They ask: how do Somali norms of community and culture inform people’s practices and experiences of ‘voice’? How do Somali norms of community and culture *in Glasgow* inform people’s practices and experiences of ‘voice’? To what extent has the environment of Glasgow City and the parallel experiences of Dispersal and Devolution shaped the formation of Somali community? With what vocal consequences? My second set of questions focuses on the infrastructures, institutions and narratives that

shape Somali voices in Glasgow. They ask: to what extent are Somali people ‘imagined’ as part of the community in Scotland? How have policies of Dispersal and Devolution ‘imagined’ and structured their places in civil society? To what extent have their post-Dispersal experiences been acknowledged or accounted for? On what terms are Somali people imagined to ‘belong’ in Scotland? On what subsequent terms are Somali people imagined to ‘have voice’ in Scotland? By whom? With what limits?

I ground my responses to these questions in decolonising ethnographic practice throughout this thesis. The research is informed by and led by the experiences of Glasgow-based Somali groups and individuals with whom I worked over a period of two years between 2014 and 2016. This dynamic itself has raised particular questions about privilege, power and research practice. Recent work by the Somali-led *Cadaan Studies* movement has critiqued 'Somali Studies' scholarship for a persistent failure to decolonise its practice (Aidid, 2015b, Aidid, 2015c, Aidid, 2015a). In work that resonates with wider decolonising, antiracist and feminist scholarship (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, Mohanty, 2003, Spivak, [1985] 2010, Ahmed, 2007), the movement has highlighted the continued complicity of the Academy in colonial and racist systems of domination, particularly in relation to Somalia and Somali people. The movement raises clear ethical, methodological and practice-based questions about this research, and asks not only that I consider my own positions of privilege and power, but also what it means to conduct this type of research from within the Academy, and what, in these contexts, the research hopes to achieve. The thesis is led by work conducted with Glasgow-based Somali people of different backgrounds, genders, generations and social groups. Through research practices that have endeavoured to respond to groups’ and individuals’ particular circumstances and priorities, this thesis foregrounds Somali voices in both content and method. In doing so, it aims to provide a space in which

otherwise diffuse voices might, through association, talk to each other and build a cohesive (if complex) account of what it means to (not) 'have voice' in Glasgow. To do so, I must first situate the experiences of Glasgow-based Somali people within their broader contexts.

1.1.2 Somali communities: in Somalia, in the UK and in Scotland

A Somali population has now lived continuously in Glasgow for the last fifteen years. From of a collection of fewer than 200 people in 2001 (Glasgow City Council, 2003), there are now approximately 4,000 people of Somali heritage living in the city (ONS, 2013). The Somali population has experienced considerable change since its arrival in Glasgow: it has developed from a population living under the precarious circumstances of asylum to a settled population with citizenship, it has built a community infrastructure where none previously existed, and it has become one of Glasgow's many communities. The arrival of Somali people in Scotland at the turn of the Millennium was the result of a coincidence in global and domestic events. At the time, civil conflict in Somalia had grown in scale and violence, prompting many to seek safety elsewhere. Those that arrived in the UK seeking asylum found themselves subject to the Dispersal Scheme, which moved many people to the primary site of Dispersal in Glasgow (discussed further below). However, whilst these specific circumstances brought Somali people to Scotland, they themselves were not without context; rather, they were the result of a long history of conflict, resistance, colonial rule and independence between the UK and Somali people.

- A very brief recent history of Somalia



Figure 1.3: Map of the contemporary Somali Republic (Harper, 2012, p. 15)

The Republic of Somalia is located in East Africa and occupies the territories that outline the Horn. The present-day Republic is relatively young, and was defined by the borders and territories of colonial occupation throughout the late nineteenth- and first half of the twentieth-century. Before this period, the Somali territories were ruled by different Sultanates (Issa-Salwe, 1996). In the nineteenth century, Italian colonists

gradually brokered deals with the Sultanates of present-day south and central Somalia, eventually gaining control of what they named Italian Somaliland. The British laid claim to the present-day Somaliland territories, which it claimed as a protectorate to aid administration of its Indian colony. British rule was resisted until 1920 by the *Daraawiish* (Dervish) State (Harper, 2012, p. 48). After the Second World War, both colonies gained independence and were joined together on July 1st 1960 as one Somali territory. Today, the borders of the Somali territories remain disputed, and present-day Somaliland declares itself an (internationally unrecognised) independent state.

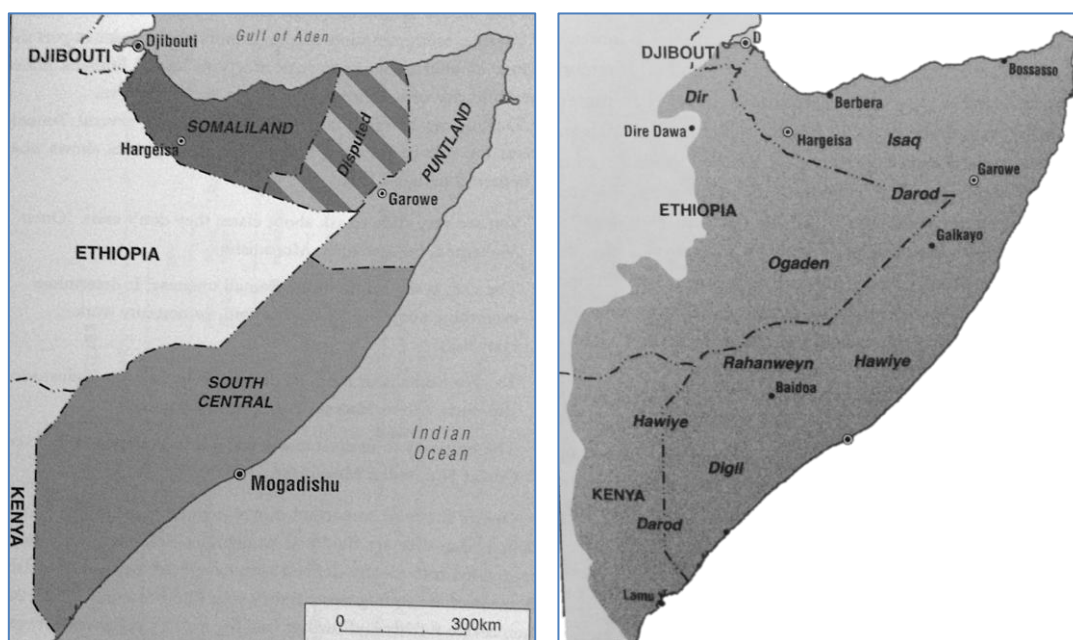


Figure 1.4: Left: map showing Somali regions (Harper, 2012, p. 35); Right: map showing territories in the Horn of Africa occupied by people of Somali descent (Harper, 2012, p. 32)

After nearly a decade of independent rule, the Republic's first government was toppled in 1969 in a coup led by Mohamed Said Barre. Ruling under the principle of 'scientific socialism', the takeover initially improved (some) aspects of life in Somalia (Harris, 2004); however, Barre's administration developed an increasingly hard-line approach to anti-government dissidents (Harris, 2004, p. 19). Ill-judged and ill-fated

military campaigns in the Ethiopian-held Ogaden, and against groups in the north (Somaliland), resulted in the displacement of millions of people and considerable clan-based tensions (Ahmed, 1999, p. 119). These factors were exacerbated by the East African drought in the 1980s. In 1991, Barre's regime was forced from power. Yet with Barre gone, groups turned against both themselves and old enemies (Besteman, 2012, p. 286). Over the following decade, as a brutal civil war developed, fighting and widespread violence, internal displacement, poverty and famine spread across the Somali regions (Harris, 2004, p. 20, Ahmed, 1999, pp. 120-1, Menkhaus, 2003, p. 4).

In 2004, attempts to end Somali 'statelessness' (Samatar, 1992) resulted in the installation of the Transitional Federal Government, a move strongly resisted by the Islamic Courts Union, from which hard-line members split to form the extremist organisation, al-Shabaab (Harris, 2004, p. 20, de Montclos, 2008, p. 299). Since 2009, al-Shabaab has waged war in the southern territories, temporarily gaining control of the Somali capital, Mogadishu. However, in 2011, government and African Union forces regained control of the capital. The Transitional Federal Government graduated to full governmental powers in 2012. In 2017, the government held its second Presidential election. Some stability has begun to return to parts of Somalia. Somaliland (in the north) has held an established regional government since 1991. However other regions – especially the capital, Mogadishu, and the southern regions of Jubba Hoose and the Lower Shabelle – remain vulnerable to attacks by militant and extremist groups (Besteman, 2012).

Throughout the last two centuries, Somalia has endured colonial power grabs, territorial divides, Western proxy conflicts, a political coup, a dictatorship, civil war, drought, famine, institutional nepotism, and terrorism. The violence, alongside precarious and dangerous living conditions, prompted people to leave throughout the

late 1980s, 1990s and 2000s. As of 2013, ‘14% of the estimated total population of 7.4 million Somalis are living abroad’ (Hofman and Reichel, 2013, p. 88). Somali populations are now located all over the world, the majority of which remain in the global south, in Yemen, Ethiopia and Kenya (Hofman and Reichel, 2013, p. 91), and South Africa (Osman, 2014).¹ A smaller proportion are located in North America and some European countries, including the UK, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland (Hofman and Reichel, 2013, p. 89, Choudhury, 2015). Of these, the UK has the largest population, with an estimated 60,000 people of Somali heritage living in various cities (Hofman and Reichel, 2013, p. 88), including London, Liverpool, Cardiff, Sheffield, Bristol, Birmingham and Leicester (Harris, 2004, p. 37, Hussain, 2014, Abdi, 2016), and now, Glasgow.

- **Somali people in the UK**

As a result of the conflict and ongoing violence in Somalia, the last three decades have marked significant increases in Somali populations in the UK, with peaks in the conflict in the 1990s and 2000s corresponding to growing numbers in those seeking refuge (Menkhaus, 2003, p. 83). However, the arrivals of the 1990s and 2000s were not the first Somali people to come to the UK. Somali people have settled in the UK since the nineteenth century, when British colonists brought men to work in the docks, steel works and military. Populations grew further in the 1950s when the economic boom in London, Sheffield and Manchester (Harris, 2004, pp. 22-23) brought more families to the UK.

¹ Yemen (with an estimated 204,685 Somali people), Ethiopia (with an estimated 185,466 Somali people) and in both the huge refugee camps (such as Dadaab near the Kenyan/Somali border) and urban settlements of Kenya (with by far the largest population of 517,666 Somalis) (Hofman and Reichel, 2013, p.91)

With both an established and recently-arrived population in the UK, the Somali population continues to be an active part of and subject to multicultural policies and dynamics. Nominally ‘a ‘third generation’ concept of liberal democracy’, ‘multiculturalism’ can be understood as a system which attempts to facilitate the idea of ‘difference’ within the contexts of civil and bordered citizenship (Tully, 2002, p. 102, Hall, 2001, p. 3). Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century and the opening decades of the twenty-first, the term has been used to discuss and discourse how people with different cultural, social, ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds might occupy public spaces in equitable terms (Vertovec, 2010). Parekh suggests the concept foregrounds the idea of a ‘community of communities’ (Parekh, 2000); others suggest its importance lies in its promotion of plural voices (Modood and Meer, 2012), and the ‘dialogue and reciprocal understanding between people of different backgrounds’ (Wood et al., 2006, p. 9) facilitated by intercultural exchange (Phillips, 2009, Vertovec, 2010). In practice, in the UK multicultural policies have been used to categorise and govern communities marked as ‘different’ in racial, ethnic and/or religious terms (Wood et al., 2006, p. 9). As a system orientated towards defining belonging and difference, ‘multiculturalism’ is a concept that has become intensely politicised (Vertovec, 2010).

In the UK, Somali people have thus been subject to consecutive multicultural policies, from the limited reach of the ‘steelbands, saris and samosas’ policies of the 1980s to the limited ‘communitarianism’ of the 1990s (Modood, 2011, Hall, 2001), to the increasing securitised discourses of the late 1990s and 2000s (Rashid, 2013, Liberatore, 2017). These approaches have actively shaped how, and the extent to which, Somali people have been seen to be part of UK society. In the 1990s and 2000s, framed as ‘refugees’, Somali communities have frequently been subjected to ‘integration’ policies, and labelled outsiders and ‘burdens’ (Hynes and Sales, 2009,

Hynes, 2011). In post 9/11 and post 7/7 contexts, as Muslims, they have been marked as ‘threats’ to ‘British values’ (Solomos, 2003, Omaar, 2007, p. 40). In recent years particularly, multicultural policy has shifted away from pluralist policy towards policies of regulation and surveillance (Liberatore, 2017). Identified as ‘at odds’ with ‘British values’, Muslim populations have become primary targets of the Prevent programme, which has extended the duties of ‘radicalisation’ monitoring to public institutions. Aimed specifically at targeting ‘vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values’ (Liberatore, 2017, p. 7), the Prevent programme actively targets categories of expression and ‘voice’. In this context, Somali people have increasingly become subject to the diffuse and active restrictions that multicultural policies have placed upon racial, ethnic and migrant populations and Muslim communities. As Muslims, with African origins, who are black, who are not necessarily Anglophone, who were not (officially) colonised,² but were nevertheless subject to colonialism (Kusow, 2006), Somalis have been subject to multiple multicultural policies which seek to act upon all the ‘differences’ they are seen to embody.

Alongside the pressures exacted by the multicultural state, the UK Somali community has experienced specific and additional challenges. This was especially the case during the population increases in the 1990s and early 2000s. As many people in this period arrived in the UK seeking asylum, the population faced the precarious circumstances and socioeconomic hardships of the immigration system. As people gained leave to remain in the UK, difficulties persisted. Research on Somali groups in London in the mid-1990s notes that people experienced post-conflict trauma (Warfa et al., 2012), alongside language and socioeconomic barriers and social and cultural upheaval. In the meantime, clan-based differences were exacerbated by the ongoing

² As a former protectorate, Somalia is not an official Commonwealth nation.

Somali conflict, causing politicised community divisions (Griffiths, 1997, Griffiths, 1999, Griffiths et al., 2006, Zetter et al., 2005). Over the following decades, further social and cultural differences materialised as the new Somali populations settled and became more established. Though in some locations traditional social infrastructure – such as clan – had been transposed into UK settings, it was not immune to environmental and social change. For instance, whilst clan retained influence in some social relationships, others – often those of younger generations – rejected it as a divisive and outdated practice (Liberatore, 2013).

Other infrastructural norms also experienced an extended period of negotiation. Approaches to gender in Somalia often depend upon a group's social background and location, and can vary across a liberal/conservative spectrum. However, gender norms remain strongly orientated towards patriarchy. In UK settings, patriarchal norms have increasingly been called into question, aided in some cases by women's increased access to welfare, education and employment (Griffiths, 1999, Hopkins, 2006, Kleist, 2010, Abdi, 2016, Mohamoud, 2011, Akua-Sakyiwah, 2012). However gender dynamics amongst Somali populations in the UK remain complex. Liberatore notes that in London increased access to secular and Islamic education has encouraged younger generations of women to emphasise piety practices – an emphasis sometimes unfamiliar with their parents' generation (Liberatore, 2013). Differences in social backgrounds and experiences of life in the UK and Somalia have also pre-empted some social differences, especially along generational lines. Older generations worry that the younger generations that have been born and raised in the UK are unfamiliar with Somali culture and language; younger generations are concerned that their parents' generations remain tied to the social systems that exacerbated the Somali conflict (Hopkins, 2006, Kleist, 2010). Since the arrival of the populations of the 1990s and

2000s, Somali communities in the UK have experienced significant social and cultural change, in grounded, specific and complex ways. Concurrently, alongside the development and renegotiation of community infrastructures and practices, norms of communication, ‘voice’ and representation have similarly experienced (complex) change. From the ‘invisibility’ and ‘the apparent absence of any organised political or social presence’ (Griffiths, 1997, p. 9) in the 1990s, to significant community and political engagement of the 2010s, Somali communities have transformed their civic participation in the UK (Muir, 2012, Topping, 2014, Guardian, 2015). In the meantime, everyday structures of ‘voice’ – communicative activity, language, representation – continue to be negotiated across multiple layers of belonging and communicative space. These changes and developments have especially occurred in long-standing Somali populations, such as in London (Guardian, 2015) and Bristol (Topping, 2014, Hill and Rahim, 2016), in which a combination of population, size, longevity and robust systems of community support have enabled the activities of individuals and groups.

The introduction of the Dispersal Scheme intervened in this process of settlement and support. Presenting asylum seekers as inherently and ‘ideologically problematic’ (Hynes and Sales, 2009, p. 42), the Dispersal Scheme was framed in terms of ‘burden sharing’ (Schuster, 2005, pp. 615-617, Hynes, 2011), and following the Immigration and Asylum Act (1999), was introduced by the New Labour government to ‘redistribute’ people seeking asylum away from south-east England to other parts of the UK. Under the Scheme, anyone who was seeking asylum was potentially subject to forcible resettlement. Alongside other populations seeking asylum, Somali people therefore found themselves ‘Dispersed’ away from family and kin to Dispersal sites across the UK. With a surplus of social housing, Glasgow City Council volunteered to become a host of ‘Dispersed’ populations, and soon was the main recipient of people in

the Scheme (de Lima, 2012, p. 100). Due to an escalation in the Somali conflict in the late 1990s and 2000s, and a subsequent increase in people leaving Somalia, for the first years of the Scheme, Somali people were one of the most numerous groups to arrive in the city (ICAR, 2009). Prior to the Scheme, there had been some small groups of Somali people living in Scotland, who had arrived as economic, education or family-orientated migrants (see Part 3.1). However, the population was impermanent and disparate. As a result, the resettlement of Somali people by the Dispersal Scheme in Glasgow was the first time a sustained Somali population had lived in the city.

- **Glasgow, Dispersal and beyond**

The implementation of Dispersal saw the beginning of sustained demographic change in Glasgow, not only in terms of the type and number of migrant people, but also in terms of nationality, race, ethnicity and religion. The mix, scale and sustained nature of the populations brought to Glasgow through the Dispersal Scheme was unprecedented for the city (Piacentini, 2012, p. 125). At the turn of the Millennium, the proportion of majority white populations in the city was higher than in other comparable UK cities (Glasgow Centre for Population Health, 2014). The city was already home to minority groups, including people of European origins and populations of South Asian backgrounds, who had migrated to Glasgow from the 1950s onwards. However, the Dispersal Scheme precluded a demographic mix and diversity not previously experienced in the city. In the first years of the Scheme, people from Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Congo and Bangladesh (ICAR, 2009) were moved to Glasgow. By 2011, in part due to the populations brought by the Dispersal Scheme to Glasgow, the proportion of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups in the city had risen from 5% in 2001 to 12% in 2011 (an increase of 140%) (Glasgow Centre for Population Health, 2014).

The conditions under which people from these populations were brought to Glasgow were also new to the city (Piacentini, 2012, p. 124). Though the city had a history of migration, the sustained scale and asylum-seeking focus of the Scheme raised particular challenges. As the Scheme targeted only people seeking asylum, the groups brought to Glasgow were often vulnerable, had few economic resources, and lived under the precarious circumstances of uncertain immigration statuses. At the same time, a now well-documented lack of government and local preparation or provision for the arrival of the new populations led to initially hostile and isolating conditions (Sim and Bowes, 2007, Darling, 2013, Schuster, 2000, Schuster, 2004, Schuster, 2005, Hill and Nic Craith, 2016) (see Part 3.1). Whilst local and national infrastructure has subsequently been developed in order to better support those arriving under the Scheme (Rosenberg, 2008), conditions of Dispersal continue to be associated with geographical, cultural and social isolation. Over time, many of the populations initially brought to Glasgow under the Scheme gained more permanent immigration statuses and were no longer subject to its conditions. However, post-Dispersal statuses have also proved challenging (Sim, 2015). Stewart notes that the ‘retention’ of those brought to Glasgow under the Scheme has been beset by a lack of employment opportunity, continued socioeconomic hardship and isolation from family and friends in other parts of the UK (Stewart, 2012, Stewart, 2013, Stewart and Shaffer, 2015). Those that stay in Glasgow also face the problems inevitable in a Scheme that forcibly moves people to locations to which they have no established connection. Populations have experienced the hardship of building ‘communities’ in environments with no pre-existing, community-specific infrastructure, and where they were initially culturally, linguistically and socially isolated (Sim and Bowes, 2007, Mulvey, 2009, Piacentini, 2012). Despite these challenges, some populations have stayed in the city and started to build up social and

community networks - an activity that, in a post-Dispersal, post-Devolution, multicultural Scottish context, presents its own particular set of conditions.

- **Somali experiences in Glasgow**

For the Somali people brought to Glasgow in the early years of Dispersal, the social and cultural environment of Glasgow City presented significant barriers to community formation (see Part 3.1). As one of the larger populations to arrive in the city in the early years of Dispersal, Somali people are featured in some scholarship that highlights the problems encountered by Dispersed populations. Sim and Bowes highlight the difficulties caused for new populations by a lack of existing social or support infrastructure. They quote a Somali participant who emphasised the lack of language provision as presenting a particular barrier to support services and ‘integration’ (Sim and Bowes, 2007, p. 736). Stewart and Mulvey also include Somali people in their analysis of early experiences of ‘integration’ in Glasgow (Stewart and Mulvey, 2011). They highlight persistent issues of social, cultural and geographical isolation for newly arrived populations in the city, as well as widespread experiences of everyday racism and structural discrimination. However, though Somali people contributed to Stewart and Mulvey’s work, the piece does not attribute quotations by nationality, so it is not possible to distinguish particular Somali experiences. Elsewhere, other scholarship dispels the myth of an absence of racist discrimination in Scotland. In the specific context of the murder of a Somali man, Axmed Abuukar Sheekh, in Edinburgh in 1989, Kelly argues that hostile media and public attitudes to the case highlighted the extent to which racism was institutionalised in Scotland before the turn of the Millennium (Kelly, 2000). Later work on the medium-term consequences of the Scheme finds that Glasgow struggles to ‘retain’ ‘Dispersed’ populations due to continued social isolation

and discrimination and a lack of employment opportunities; however, though onward migration is a likelihood for ‘Dispersed’ populations, despite the challenging conditions, Somali populations have been more likely to stay in Glasgow (Stewart, 2013).

More recent scholarship that features Somali people has highlighted the difficulties they have encountered as citizens of Glasgow. Comparative research by Sosenko et al. (2013) notes that of the ethnic minority populations in Glasgow, the Somali population has a higher incident of unemployment and reliance on welfare than other minority populations. As a result, they argue, Somali people have been especially vulnerable to austerity measures, existing structural barriers and institutional discrimination in Scotland (Sosenko et al., 2013). Where Sosenko et al. (2013) have considered the impact of racialised and socioeconomic factors upon Somali people’s experiences in Glasgow, Hopkins (Hopkins, 2004, Hopkins et al., 2015) considers their experiences as Muslims. In a comparative study of young Muslim men’s experiences of masculinity, he features the experiences of some Somali men. The Somali participants in the study note that racialised and anti-Muslim attitudes in Scotland frequently identify them as ‘out of place’. Hopkins links their experiences to broader trends of gendered discourses about Islam and anti-Muslim attitudes.

The scholarship in which Scotland-based Somali people have featured begins to build an impression of their experiences of the social and cultural environment in the city since the turn of the Millennium. It highlights the significant challenges presented by the initial act of Dispersal, alongside long-term impacts of the Scheme, including social isolation and socioeconomic disadvantage. It hints at the role the media has played in the representation of Somali people in Scotland (Kelly, 2000). It also suggests that existing civil infrastructure has played an inhibitive role in the

development of the Somali community in Glasgow (Sosenko et al., 2013). It highlights in a broad sense the enduring presence of racism and anti-Muslim attitudes in Scotland and begins to consider how they have impacted upon (some) Somali people's experiences. However, though this scholarship collectively sketches an outline of Somali experiences in Scotland, it is bounded by the topics on which it focuses: Dispersal, 'integration', austerity, racist and anti-Muslim experiences. As a result, there is currently no scholarship that addresses in a continuous or cohesive manner how Somali experiences of these topics might be linked or related.

In addition, though the scholarship above contains Somali experiences, they are often situated in a comparative context or referred to in an illustrative manner. Consequently, there is no scholarship that considers Somali experiences in a sustained or in-depth manner; nor is there any scholarship that actively gives primary precedence to Somali experiences, cultures or practices. Piacentini's ethnography of West African community organisation in Glasgow has shown that sustained and participatory work with community groups in Glasgow highlight the particulars and complexities of the groups' experiences that would otherwise be lost in general overtures about Dispersal, Devolution and multiculturalism in Scotland (Piacentini, 2012, Piacentini, 2014). In the meantime, ethnographies on Somali populations in other parts of the UK have highlighted the strong influence that Somali social and cultural norms continue to have upon Somali experiences of community and belonging (Griffiths, 1999, Liberatore, 2013, Hopkins, 2006). These studies suggest that a consideration of Somali experiences of community and communication need to be grounded not only in a consideration of the broader social and political context but also in an analysis of Somali cultural and social norms. Though these studies do not explicitly state its influence, the environments in which Somali populations have settled also appear to have impacted

upon their social and communicative experiences. What then, of Somali experiences in a Scottish setting?

1.2.3 Gaps and questions

From these contexts, experiences and environments, gaps and questions arise that are currently unaccounted for. I would suggest these gaps and questions can be placed in three main categories:

1) **Knowledge and understanding of Somali communities in Glasgow**

Despite Somali people's fifteen-year continuous residency in Glasgow, there is little 'joined-up' knowledge or understanding about their experiences in the city. Research and community projects with Somali populations in other parts of the UK have helped to trace their history, negotiations and interactions both with civil society and with 'internal' community structures (Griffiths, 1997, Liberatore, 2013); in some cases, this has helped to highlight infrastructural and social inequalities, and social and cultural complexities that have impacted Somali people's communicative experiences. This has not occurred in the Glasgow context. In addition, Somali people are not a homogeneous group of people and their social and cultural stratifications lead to very different communicative experiences. Who makes up the Somali population in Glasgow? In what ways? With what communicative consequences? What is their history with Glasgow, and with Scotland? How do their experiences relate to the context of multicultural Scotland?

2) Comparative contexts and the Glasgow environment

Research and community work with other Somali populations in other parts of the UK identify 'internal' social and cultural norms that have influence upon Somali people's communicative activities. It also highlights how in post-migration contexts these norms have been subject to negotiation and change. To what extent have Somali people in Glasgow encountered similar periods of negotiation? With what social, cultural and communicative similarities or differences? How has the lack of an already-established Somali community affected the practice of social and community norms? How has the lack of an already-established Somali community infrastructure affected community and communicative formation? Alongside these considerations, my review above suggests that the Glaswegian context - its geographic, demographic, social and socioeconomic environments - has potential to shape and inform community and communicative practices. To what extent has this been the case in Somali experiences? How has this affected the formation and representation of Somali community in Glasgow?

If the communicative experiences of Somali people have been informed by the Glaswegian environment, the context of their majority arrival in Glasgow - Dispersal - must also be taken into account. Scholarship has comprehensively traced the inadequacies of initial community support infrastructure: to what extent did these factor in early Somali experiences in the city? With what consequences for community formation? Now long-settled in Glasgow outwith the infrastructure of Dispersal, the Somali population can no longer be considered within the Scheme's immediate frame of reference. However, and as some research above tentatively suggests, Dispersal can have long-term social and socioeconomic consequences for post-Scheme populations. What impact has it had upon Somali experiences of

community in the city? To what extent do Somali people continue to be subject to the rhetorical reach of ‘arrival’ rhetoric – ‘integration’, community ‘cohesion’ – and how does this impact their experiences?

3) The impact of civil infrastructure and public discourses in Scotland upon Somali people

Research notes that emphasis on ‘the nation’ - both as part of and distinct from the UK – alongside the devolved context and a distinct political approach has led to a complex multicultural context in Scotland. Imaginings of ‘the nation’ interact with multicultural tenants of democracy and dialogue to create layered norms of belonging and exclusion. Research has suggested that whilst the nominally progressive multicultural agenda of the Scottish Government has championed an egalitarian ‘community of communities’, the experiences of minority communities – and especially communities of colour – has suggested this does not translate into everyday life. What are Somali experiences of ‘multiculturalism’ in Glasgow? To what extent has the infrastructure of multiculturalism informed, shaped or hindered their representation and participation in civil society? To what extent do dominant ‘imaginings’ of the nation account for, include or exclude their position in civil society? To what extent are anti-Muslim, anti-Somali and racist discourses mobilised in Scotland? With what consequences for Somali voices?

1.2.4 Shaping and directing the research

Existing literature and information on both the Somali population in Glasgow, and on the Dispersed, Devolved context suggests that there are significant gaps in knowledge and understanding of their experiences in the city. These gaps point towards specific

areas that further research might address, such as building knowledge of the population, considering Somali social and cultural practices in a Glasgow environment, or analysing the long-term effects of Dispersal and Devolution in the context of Somali experiences. However, where existing scholarship might provide some insight into potential spaces of enquiry, they alone cannot determine the scope, purpose or focus of this project. Decolonising and ethnographic scholarship has long stressed the need to consider the positions and perspectives of those with whom research is conducted (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). Decolonising research has also highlighted how unreflexive research processes can create results that are of more harm than use for the participants involved (Tuck and Yang, 2014). In this context, the recent work of the *Cadaan Studies* movement traces how scholarly narratives about Somali people have largely reproduced structures of power and domination by imposing top-down analyses and monopolising narrative access to the subject (Aidid, 2015c, Abumaye, 2016).

I have therefore tried to ensure that, even though this research is situated within the gaps and contexts situated above, its direction, concerns and topics are foregrounded in and led by the experiences of Somali people in Glasgow. I found that the primary concern of the large majority of people with whom I spoke were concerned that Somali people were ‘invisible’ and ‘without voice’ in Glasgow. People associated these concerns with a lack of knowledge of Somali people and Somali culture, with the complex dynamics amongst the Somali population and with the structural and social conditions in Glasgow. Throughout my work with various groups and individuals, we discussed the position and role of research in these circumstances. Though there were many differences of opinions about what these might be, there were some common themes. First, that research might be able to trace some of the conditions involved with Somali experiences of ‘voicelessness’ in Glasgow and make visible their cause; second,

that it might on a limited and small scale provide resources and opportunities for participants to address these conditions; third, that it might piece together the experiences of Somali people in a cohesive fashion, so that they could be situated both in broader narratives about Somalis in the UK and in broader narratives about belonging and ‘voice’ in Scotland.

In its direction, ethics, content and critique, this thesis has therefore been carefully and reflexively shaped. First and foremost, it takes into account the concerns and requirements of the Somali groups and individuals who have been involved in its activities. It also tries to make use of its status as a *research* project to include the resources, information and gaps of existing scholarly and social knowledge in discussions about Somali experiences. Aware that it is explicitly involved narrative and knowledge creation, it does so whilst taking on board the critiques of decolonising scholarship. As a result, it seeks to create an account of Somali experiences of (not) ‘having voice’ in Glasgow that foregrounds dialogic rather hierarchical productions of knowledge. Taking into account this balance, it does so with some broad aims:

1. to build a cohesive account of Somali histories and experiences in Glasgow
2. to trace Somali cultures, practices and infrastructures that contribute to their communicative experiences in Glasgow
3. to build a grounded understanding of how the Dispersed and Devolved context of Glasgow has impacted Somali experiences of ‘voice’
4. led by Somali experiences, to develop a critique of the civic, social and cultural norms in Scotland to which Somali people are subject

5. in the context of ethnographic and decolonising research, develop research practices that actively respond to questions of ‘voice’, privilege, and power in the specific context of this research

In doing so, it aims to create the beginnings of a narrative about Somali people’s experiences of (not) ‘having voice’ in Glasgow City, led and informed by Somali groups and individuals in Glasgow.

1.2.5 Thesis structure

Taking into account the aims above and led by Somali experiences and opinions, this thesis therefore proceeds as follows. Part 2 seeks to address the issues of privilege, power and practice in the research. Split into four sections, it first considers existing theoretical approaches to the topic of ‘voice’, and deconstructs their assumptions and ideologies. In the second section, it grounds this deconstruction in decolonising approaches to research and considers the position and problems of this thesis in the recent critique of the *Cadaan Studies* movement of ‘Somali Studies’ scholarship. The third section discusses how decolonising critiques shaped my ethnographic fieldwork and discusses the dynamics of ‘the field’, whilst the fourth section considers these critiques in the context of the written thesis.

Parts 3, 4 and 5 focus specifically on Somali experiences of (not) ‘having voice’ in Glasgow. Part 3 begins by tracing Somali people’s historic relationship with Scotland and in Part 3.1, narrativises in detail people’s experiences of the immediate and long-term effects of Dispersal. Part 3.2 begins to problematise Somali experiences in terms of community and communication. Amongst Somali experiences in Glasgow, it finds a strong identification with Somali community, a contrarily expressed concern

with community fracture and difference, and further complications caused by external influences. Part 4 seeks to deal with the first two of these elements – the combined experience of community cohesion and fracture – in detail. It discusses the influence of Somali social norms – especially clan-based, gendered and generational hierarchies – upon community cohesion and fracture and highlights their implications for Somali people’s (different) experiences of ‘voice’. It also begins to identify a strong environmental influence from the Glasgow context and analyses through a series of comparisons how the city has shaped communicative practices and infrastructures. Part 4.1 finds significant differences between Glasgow-based clan practices and practices of populations elsewhere. Part 4.2 discusses the communicative experiences of Somali women in Glasgow and highlights the situated and intersecting factors that contribute to the extent to which they (do not) ‘have voice’. Part 4.3 focuses specifically on the experiences of members of a minority Somali clan – the Bajuni – to highlight the communicative consequences of internal and external institutional racisms.

Part 5 develops the theme of environmental and external influence further. Led by Somali testimonies, it identifies three areas of civic life that have shaped, supported and inhibited the participation and representation of Somali people in public spaces. Part 5.1 considers the extent to which multicultural and ‘community development’ policies in Scotland have enhanced or inhibited Somali attempts to have civic ‘voice’. Part 5.2 responds to Somali critiques of their representation in the news-media to analyse the extent to which the Scottish press (does not) ‘imagine’ the Somali population as part of the (Scottish) nation, and discusses the implications of its findings for Somali voices. Finally, Part 5.3 places Somali people’s frequent experiences of racist, anti-Muslim and gendered discrimination in the public spaces of Glasgow within the still-ubiquitous context of whiteness in the city. Considering experiences of ‘space’

in material, located, phenomenological and aural terms, it makes the connection between racist incidents and broader norms of belonging and exclusion in the city, and traces the implications they have for Somali experiences of ‘voice’ and citizenship. Concluding the thesis, Part 6 endeavours to bring the themes of Parts 3, 4 and 5 together to reflect upon how ‘internal’ and ‘external’ norms of community and communication in Glasgow interact and intersect in Somali people’s everyday experiences of ‘voice’.

Part 2: Researching 'voice'

Researching 'voice' in intercultural contexts has philosophical, ethical and methodological implications. Part 2 considers how these implications might shape and inform my research practices throughout this thesis. I begin in Part 2.1 with a brief consideration of existing theoretical and philosophical approaches to the concept of 'voice'. Tracing the relationship between these approaches and the practices of community, privilege and power, I then use this theoretical groundwork in Part 2.2 to consider an ethics of 'voice', and attempt to position this research within a vocally – and ethically – aware context. I respond to the recent work of the *Cadaan Studies* movement, which critiques systems of whiteness in scholarship about Somali people, and try to map its points onto an intercultural methodology. In Part 2.3, I discuss the fieldwork that informs this thesis and try to make visible the sometimes 'messy' methods (Law, 2004), practices and decisions of which I have made. Part 2.4 considers the structure and conventions of the written ethnography.

2.1 Theorising 'Voice'

In the introduction to this thesis (Part 1.1), I discussed how the context of the 2014 Referendum on Scottish Independence had highlighted how the category of 'the voice' had plural possibilities and meanings. In this context, 'the voice', I suggested, was a 'vote', a symbol of citizenship, a product of community membership, or an act of direct communicative action. The many possibilities of 'the voice' in this context gives it a correspondingly broad frame of reference that encompasses its role in society and community-formation, its part in making things have meaning, and its role in facilitating relationships and everyday interaction. In this context, and faced with the plural possibilities of 'the voice', Part 2.1 echoes Dolar to ask and respond to the question, 'how has the voice given rise to so many metaphors with uncertain limitations?' (Dolar, 2006, p. 111).

2.1.1 A genealogy of voice and meaning

In both Biblical and Qur'anic philosophical traditions, the relationship between 'voice', humanity and the divine shapes the manner in which human actions are understood to be meaningful (Cavarero, 2005, Dolar, 2006). In Biblical traditions, 'the voice' is seen to bridge the gap between a person and God, the body and the divine; it is both the conduit and expression of the 'soul', itself the product of the 'breath' of God (Aristotle, 2001, 420b, KJB, 2004; John 1:1). In Qur'anic tradition, 'voice' is both the unfiltered truth of Allah, and the 'created', revelatory speech (*wahy*) recorded in the Qur'an (El-Bizri, 2008, p. 122, Blankinship, 2008, p. 53). In these relationships between person, 'voice' and the divine, human actions are made meaningful by expressing, taking

inspiration from, or working towards the divine; ‘the voice’, variously, is the vehicle, the link, the means or the embodiment through which this work is done.

Asad argues that though in modern and contemporary society the relationship between humanity, ‘voice’ and the divine has been secularised, the semantic links between the three have been retained (Asad et al., 2013). Taking up the secular terms of ‘the voice’, Derrida deconstructs contemporary vocal semantics (Derrida, 2004, Derrida, 1973). Where ‘voice’ previously was understood in relationship towards a soul or inherent being, ‘voice’ is now associated with self, subjectivity, even agency. Where ‘voice’ was previously associated with the omniscience of the divine, it is now associated with ‘truth’, ‘authenticity’ and ‘reality’ (Derrida, 2004). In combination, ‘voice’, the person (soul/subject) and reality (the divine/the truth) create scaffolds – grammars (Derrida, 2004) – of meaning-making that affect and reflect the way in which one sees, experiences and acts in the world.

The dominant mode with which ‘voice’ has been embedded in the contemporary West relies on an understanding that the relationship between ‘voice’ and reality is fixed and (at the very least) ‘proximate’. Derrida argues that because traditionally ‘the voice’ has been understood to exist in close proximity to the ‘ideality of meaning’ (i.e. the divine, truth, reality), it has been seized upon as a powerful and efficient way of communicating meaning, so that it appears that ‘the voice stands at the axis of our social bonds, and that voices are the very texture of the social, as well as the intimate kernel of subjectivity’ (Dolar, 2006, p. 14). For Derrida, this is a sleight of hand. Deconstructionist scholarship argues that meaning-making relies on a semantic grammar, in which a sign is understood to be a signifier of a signified (Derrida, 2004); however, with such a close relationship to ‘the truth’ (reality/the divine), Derrida suggests, ‘the voice’ short-circuits signification. Understood as both signifier and

signified, 'the voice' therefore presents 'the absolute effacement of the signifier' (Derrida, 2004, p. 314). This dynamic infers that 'voice' *is* meaning, so that when one speaks, it is 'voice' that makes one's communicative activity – and by extension, oneself – meaningful. Derrida suggests that deconstruction reveals that it is not 'the voice' that creates meaning but the systems of discourse. Others argue that this deconstructionist approach to 'voice' ignores the importance of its grounded and sonorous properties (Schlichter, 2011). However, Dolar observes, many social systems rely upon the voice's symbolic capacity to inhere meaning. Dolar suggests that the 'ritual efficacy' of 'the voice' (Dolar, 2006, p. 109) empowers social systems because it implies a parlance with reality ('truth'/authenticity) beyond themselves. For instance, he argues, 'voice' provides meaning to many religious ceremonies, it is the means through which justice is enacted in court and through which academic knowledge is tested (*viva voce*) (Dolar, 2006, pp. 107-110)³.

2.1.2 The social life of the voice

For others, 'voice' is important not because of its role in semantic grammar, but because of how it creates meaning in social situations. Cavarero suggests that in social interactions, 'the voice' facilitates a link between systems of meaning and the situated moment of a discussion. She comments, 'in the [voiced] uniqueness that makes itself heard there is an embodied existent, or rather, a 'being there' [esserci] in its radical finitude, here and now. The sphere of the vocal implies the ontological plane and anchors it to the existence of singular beings who invoke one another contextually' (Cavarero, 2005, p. 173). Cavarero's approach to 'voice' develops and expands Derrida's analysis as 'voice' as a solely semantic category. For Cavarero, whilst 'the voice's' role

³ Cf. Dolar 2006, 107-110 for an in depth exploration of the role of 'voice' in these institutions.

in inhering 'the ontological plane' remains important, its grounded and 'immediate' (Cavarero, 2005, p. 150) 'radical finitude' is of equal importance. Here, 'voice' signposts the route from grounded, banal social interactions to philosophical, ideological or religious ontology. In its former role, 'voice' takes meaning from the quality of 'coevalness', a shared and simultaneous experience of being in the same place at the same time as another person or group (Fabian, 2014, p. 31). Thus located between 'the ontological plane' and the most everyday of interactions, 'voice' is implicated both in how people relate to reality and to each other. 'Voice', Barthes argues, is thus the 'grain' of communicative activity (Cavarero, 2005, p. 15)⁴ which has the potential to 'create openings in the production of meaningful social subjects' (Schlichter, 2011, p. 35).

In a development of Althusser's work on interpellation (Althusser, 1971, pp. 161-2), Ahmed (2000), and Brah and Phoenix (2013) respectively suggest that 'voice' is not simply a facilitator of social interaction and meaning, but rather is the instigator of socialising activities. Brah and Phoenix argue that people become socialised when they are made subjects of social systems (Brah and Phoenix, 2013). This occurs, they argue, through the Althusserian concept of 'interpellation'. Althusser argued that subjectivities are created through processes of 'interpellation', which can be understood as a process of 'hailing' - of recognising another person and calling out to them in the same way that a police officer might call out to a person in the street, 'hey, you there!' (Althusser, 1971). Ahmed argues that the process of interpellation must be understood as not simply a process of social recognition, but as a process of 'inter-subjective differentiation' (Ahmed, 2000, p. 21). At the moment at which a person is interpellated, Ahmed suggests, two subjectivities are created: first, the subjectivity of the person who has been 'hailed', and made subject of the others gaze and voice, and second, the subjectivity

⁴ Cavarero translates and quotes Barthes's contribution to 'Ascolto' (1977).

of the person who 'hails', who has 'recognised' the other as separate from and different to them (Ahmed, 2000, p. 21).

Ahmed critiques Althusser's original concept of 'interpellation' because, she argues, it fails to account for how this process of differentiation is embedded in systems of social privilege and power (Ahmed, 2000, pp. 21-2). I return to these themes below. Meanwhile, Brah and Phoenix argue that interpellation emphasises processes of socialisation as inherently interactive activities: interpellation does not simply occur once in an interaction, they argue, but occurs as a constant process that asks that the person who 'hails' and the person who is 'hailed' orientate and reorientate themselves and their interpellative activities as they interact with each other (Brah and Phoenix, 2013). If Brah and Phoenix emphasise the interactive environment of interpellation, I would emphasise the strongly vocal environment in which it occurs. If interpellation begins with a process of 'hailing' – of 'hey you there' – then it also begins with a moment of figurative or literal 'voice'. In this context, processes of interaction and orientation, power and privilege might not simply be associated with vocal acts, but rather understood as acts of 'voice' themselves that inhere the 'ontological plane' (Cavarero, 2005, p. 173) but remain grounded and situated in social relationships.

2.1.3 Organising the voice: community and communication

Through processes of interpellation and reinterpellation, 'voice' therefore makes subjects of and socialises people. 'Voice' might therefore also be understood as involved in the processes and production of community. The idea of community has been subject to significant change in modern times. Once a term used to express ideas about territorialised, placed and monoethnic groups of people (Back, 2009), it has become unbound in the contemporary world. Due to technological advancement,

demographic change and 'globalised' movements, community can now be mobilised across distance, borders and belongings (Appadurai, 1996); it might not necessarily be 'placed', nor might it have a homogenous membership or sense of purpose. This scale of change has led some to question the role and purpose of community in contemporary times (Back, 2009, Vertovec, 2010). In the UK, some political and media factions lament that an increasingly multicultural society of plural and multidirectional belongings has marked the 'death' of community (see Modood, 2011). Others note how the term has been used euphemistically by state institutions to promote a veneer of inclusivity even as it also categorises, controls and contains people through the terms of difference and discrimination (Phillips, 2009, p. 17).

Nevertheless, for many groups and individuals in the contemporary UK, the role of community retains its importance. In 2000, Parekh suggested that it had a central part to play in the UK's multicultural dynamic, which he saw as achievable through a 'community of communities' (Parekh, 2000). More recently, others have suggested that it remains key to 'intercultural exchange' and the promotion of plural voices in the UK (Meer and Modood, 2012). Werbner's work with people from the South Asian diaspora emphasises community can be defined in multiple ways – on the grounds of, for instance, a shared culture, background, faith, gender or language – and that people can belong to multiple 'communities' at the same time (Werbner, 2001, Werbner, 2004, see also Fraser, 1990, Squires, 2002). Werbner suggests that membership of multiple 'communities' allows people of South Asian heritage to maintain a sense of belonging, whilst negotiating spaces of hybridity (Werbner, 2004, see also Bhabha and Rutherford, 2006). Elsewhere, scholarship has emphasised the role of community in providing 'safe spaces' (Hill-Collins, 2002, p. 100) or spaces of cultural or social familiarity (Bjork, 2007). For many, a sense of community and belonging is strongly related to

experiences of ‘voice’, so that (for instance) ‘voice’ is seen as a facilitator of social interactions, as a vehicle for dialogue, or as the product of community belonging. Community, Fraser suggests, enables one to ‘speak in one’s own voice [...] simultaneously constructing and expressing one’s cultural identity through idiom and style’ (Fraser 1990, 69). This is a theme I explore in more detail throughout this thesis.

In fact, though community might be seen as a facilitator of ‘voice’, ‘voice’ – or at least communicative activity – might once again be seen as a facilitator of community. Considering the attitudes of states towards immigrants, Derrida and Dufourmantelle argue that language acquisition is often imposed as a prerequisite to belonging and community (Derrida and Dufourmantelle, 2000, p. 15). In this context, they argue, to be considered even eligible for inclusion in the dominant communities of the state, ‘the foreigner’ is required to ‘speak our language, in all the senses of this term, in all its possible extensions’ (Derrida and Dufourmantelle, 2000, p. 15). For Derrida and Dufourmantelle, communicative activity – in this case, specifically language-learning – underpins any community-based activities. Here, communicative activity is creative and expansive: ‘speaking the language *in all senses of this term*’ does not simply facilitate community-belonging, but creates it. Research by linguists and anthropologists has emphasised the importance of language in the creation of community (see, for instance Nic Craith and Hill, 2015). In these contexts, community is first and foremost communicative, informed by both communicative practice and communicative infrastructure.

2.1.4 Commun(e)icative belonging and exclusion

In the community dynamics described above, according to Derrida and Dufourmantelle, one is included in – and has a ‘voice’ in – community when one

‘speaks the language *in all senses of the term*’. Though community might therefore foreground the importance of communication, it places conditions on commun(e)icative belonging: if one is to ‘have voice’, one is to ‘speak the language’. If the requirement of ‘speaking the language’ is treated figuratively rather than literally, commun(e)icative belonging is subsequently revealed to have conditions and limits. The limits of commun(e)icative belonging are established and maintained by social (and therefore communicative) norms. Norms, Ahmed argues, are established by the repeated actions of particular bodies in particular ways over time so that they become ‘normative’: unseen, part of the background, unremarkable (Ahmed, 2007, p. 156). One’s belonging in a community is therefore related to the extent to which one ‘fits’ the norm: if one ‘fits’, then one is included and becomes ‘unremarkable’; if one does not ‘fit’, one is ‘marked’ as an outlier (Ahmed, 2007, p. 159). ‘Having voice’, in these circumstances, is rather counter-intuitively about not being noticeable, not being ‘loud’ or ‘noisy’, not speaking the ‘wrong language’ or not speaking in the ‘wrong way’, not seeming ‘out of place’ (Gunaratnam, 2013). Rather, ‘having voice’ is about inhabiting and adhering to normative positions, contributing to their reproduction and having the place to do so.

Though dominant narratives about ‘voice’ in society may therefore associate it with democratic access (see Dolar, 2006, pp. 107-110) or egalitarianism (Arshad, 2008; see Part 3), in reality, the category of ‘voice’ and people’s voices themselves are subject to normative hierarchies. In the UK, particular ideas about citizenship establish particular norms and hierarchies of belonging. As I will discuss in more detail throughout the thesis, despite a multicultural and ostensibly liberal approach to society, in the UK, certain positions retain dominance and privileges, including norms of race (whiteness), faith (Christianity/secularism), citizenship (‘indigeneity’), nation (Anglo-British), language (anglophone), gender (male) and sexuality (heterosexual). In

Scotland, there are further norms and normative complications arising from distinct social traditions about citizenship, democracy and nationhood (Meer, 2015, Netto, 2008). Within these contexts, broad 'national' narratives frequently mark people of colour, Muslims and migrants as 'outliers' (Gunaratnam, 2013) from the norm (see Gilroy, 2002, Mirza, 2009, Rashid, 2013, Modood, 2003, Ahmed, 2007, Emejulu and Bassel, 2015).

If social norms establish hierarchies of belonging in the UK and in Scotland, they also create hierarchies of 'voice'. The occupation of the norm bestows power and privilege upon those who inhabit it, and enable them to define the terms, conditions and limits of commun(e)icative belonging. If 'voice' is subject to the norms of a social group, system or institution, it might therefore be considered as both conditioned and conditional: one either speaks in the terms and the environment of the norm, or one is not heard, one does not 'belong', and one is not considered to 'have voice' (Spivak, [1985] 2010). In these circumstances, Spivak suggests, the subject 'cannot speak': their voices, and the terms in which their voices can be both heard and expressed, have already been determined by a system that has its own 'heliocentric' interests at heart (Spivak, [1985] 2010, p. 27).

Other scholars agree: Hill-Collins notes that under these conditions, for people in 'minority' positions, experiences and practices of 'voice' are often only partial or fragmented (Hill-Collins, 2002, p. 99). Yancy goes further: he argues, for people of colour and minority groups, to 'speak' in the environment and terms of the dominant norms of Western society amounts to nothing less than 'erasure' (Yancy, 2008). As I discuss in Part 2.2, decolonising scholarship has made multiple and comprehensive cases for how these systems of vocal dominance must be related to Western histories of colonialism (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). Of particular relevance to this thesis, the *Cadaan*

Studies movement traces how scholarship about Somali people has exacted systemic erasures of Somali voices from its dominant narratives (Aidid, 2015b, Aidid, 2015c, Aidid, 2015a) (discussed further below). Meanwhile, and in the light of social and institutional infrastructures of ‘voice’, de Certeau rather sardonically concludes, ‘far, too far away from economic and administrative powers’, de Certeau comments, ‘there is a [misplaced] conviction that “the People speak”’ (De Certeau, 1998, p. 132).

2.1.5 ‘Having voice’, community and communication

Part 2.1 has briefly considered the themes, theories and implications of ‘voice’ likely to arise in this thesis. Whilst noting ‘the voice’s’ association with meaning-making and its capacity to inhere ‘an ontological plane’ (Cavarero, 2005, p. 173), it follows Cavarero in placing equal emphasis on ‘the voice’s’ grounded, situated and ‘immediate’ qualities. Arguing that ‘voice’ is not simply facilitated by social interaction, but that it is instead embedded within processes of socialisation, I argue that ‘voice’ finds a social home in the creation of community. Here, I also note the mutually-creative relationship between community and communication. However, I also argue, though ‘voice’ therefore informs processes of community, community does not necessarily support the ideologies of equality and freedom associated with ‘voice’. Rather, I suggest, community establishes positions of power and privilege that enact vocal violences on those who are not seen to occupy normative positions. In these circumstances, and following de Certeau above, I observe that though ‘voice’ may inform, underpin and facilitate practices of community, it is also limited and conditioned by processes of socialisation, hierarchy and inequality. Considering the structural relationship of ‘the voice’ to the polis, Agamben suggests that the subjugation of ‘the voice’ to the politics and divisions of society is perhaps inevitable (Agamben, 1995, pp. 5-8). In Ancient

Greek philosophy, he notes, ‘voice’ was associated with the quality of *zoe* – of ‘bare life’ that existed at the limits of the structures and cultures of society. As ‘bare life’, Agamben suggests, ‘voice’ was understood as both an opposition and a threat to society, and was thus subject to considerable restrictions. However, Agamben argues, the same quality of ‘bare life’ also gave it significant potential to challenge, undo or subvert social structures along with their inherent hierarchies. Perhaps vocal subjugation is not such a foregone conclusion as de Certeau suggests.

- **Postscript**

Though this chapter has deconstructed how and why ‘voice’ ‘gives rise to so many meanings’ (Dolar, 2006, p. 111), it has not conducted an in-depth analysis of how ‘voice’ is subsequently used to inform social and political discourses. In liberal discourses, narratives about ‘voice’ often closely associate it with qualities of subjectivity, agency and ‘choice’, based on the vocal grammar that implies that one’s ‘voice’ infallibly expresses oneself. In this context, understandings of ‘voice’ are based on what Mahmood identifies as the liberal norm of ‘positive freedom’, which understands freedom in terms of one’s choice and mastery over one’s own decisions (Mahmood, 2011, pp. 9-11). Mahmood argues that though the idea of ‘positive freedom’ may remain instrumental to the definition of society in the West, it does not qualify as a ‘universal category’ and thus should not be treated uncritically or as if it were the only way to approach society (Mahmood, 2011, p. 9). In categories and definitions of ‘freedom’, she argues, alternative modes of agency, ‘being-in-the-world’ and teleology are in danger of being obscured and occluded (Mahmood, 2011, p. 9). I would suggest that Mahmood’s comments are important for the consideration of ‘voice’ in this thesis: though the narratives and discourses I encounter may frequently associate

‘voice’ with categories of ‘positive freedom’ – choice, agency, subjectivity – these are not the only categories and this is not the only teleology with which ‘voice’ can be associated. How else might ‘voice’ be defined? On what teleological grounds? And with what consequences for socialisation, community and meaning-making?

2.2 Decolonising research

Part 2.1 highlights 'voices' as situated and circumstantial, relational and individual. The circumstances in which voices (do not) occur have implications for the ways in which this research is done, and throw up ethical and methodological questions, which cannot be separated from one another. This chapter draws on recent critiques of whiteness in 'Somali Studies' (Aidid, 2015a, Aidid, 2015b, Aidid, 2015c), alongside calls to 'decolonise' academic research methods (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008, Tuhiwai Smith, 1999) to take a critical approach to the ways in which Somali voices are constructed, represented and vocalised in this thesis.

2.2.1 Decolonising research and *Cadaan Studies*

The issues of knowledge production, representation and power (Whose knowledge? How is it knowledge? Why? About whom? By whom?), especially in research interested in communities of Somali heritage, are sharply brought into focus by the recent work of a collective of US-based Somali scholars (see Aidid, 2015c, Aidid, 2015b, Hassan, 2015, Abdi, 2015). Led by Harvard doctoral researcher Saafia Aidid, the collective started the *Cadaan Studies* movement in 2015 to reflect, critique and make visible the enduring legacy and practices of whiteness in contemporary Somali Studies (*cadaan* is Somali for white/whiteness).

Contemporary institutional and academic knowledge production about Somali people has roots in the British and Italian colonial projects in the Somali territories. Aidid argues that Richard Burton's infamous stereotyping in the 1850s of Somalis as a 'fierce', 'turbulent' and 'superstitious race' set the tone for future scholarship about Somalis and Somalia, wherein 'only Europeans were seen as capable of the rigorous analysis, reason' (Aidid, 2015c). These were themes continued 100 years later in the

work of Glasgow-born anthropologist I.M. Lewis, whose work and clan-focussed interpretation of pastoral lifestyles in (present-day) Somaliland continues to have significant influence in modern scholarship about Somali people and Somalia (Lewis, 1999). From the 1950s onwards, Lewis conducted fieldwork in (present-day) Somaliland whilst it was still a British protectorate, financially supported by, and a part-time administrator for, the British colonial government. Lidwen Kapteijns's (re)consideration of Somali clan practices critiques Lewis's anthropology for being an unreflexive product of its colonial circumstances, and argues that Lewis's representation of clan structures is implicated in the 'technologies of government' subsequently used to rule Somali peoples (Kapteijns, 2004) (see Part 4.1 for further discussion of Kapteijns's argument). Catherine Besteman too critiques Lewis's work for perpetuating 'Othering' stereotypes about Somali people (Besteman, 1996). In the 1990s and 2000s, scholars of Somali heritage, such as Ali Jimale Ahmed and Abdi Kusow, began to deconstruct still-powerful, colonially-instigated and patriarchally-orientated 'myths' about Somalis and Somalia (Kusow, 2004, Ahmed, 1995b, Choi-Ahmed, 1995). However, despite these movements, and as Aidid observes, the 'Somali Studies' Academy remained impervious to critique on the grounds of knowledge production (Aidid, 2015b, Aidid, 2015c). Issues of whiteness, colonialism or power dynamics were left largely unaddressed; critiques of Lewis's work (Kapteijns, 2004, Besteman, 1996) were left out of canonical publications.⁵

Informed by these critiques of the relationship between the Academy and Somali people, the *Cadaan Studies* movement mobilised in 2015 following a specific series of heated online discussions about the role of whiteness in the field, detailed in Appendix A. Aidid explains the movement's stance and urgency:

⁵ And often eviscerated by Lewis himself (Lewis 1998)

#CadaanStudies gestures towards the conceptual whiteness of knowledge production in Somali Studies. It is an analysis of the systemic and the normative positions and relations it produces. It is a way of thinking about the words of one anthropologist and the exclusions of one journal not as isolated incidents, but as signifiers of the current state of Somali Studies, and the ways in which it has continued to sustain non-Somali dominance on all things Somali. It examines how colonial logic is replicated in contemporary scholarship on Somalis, and in the research practices of non-Somali academics in their gaze upon the Somali.

(Aidid, 2015b)

Through its critique of institutional, racialised and colonial power, the *Cadaan Studies* movement not only highlights the extent to which the Academy is implicated in the perpetuation of racist and discriminatory structures, but also demonstrates how these structures are linked to global, social patterns of privilege, dominance and inequality. At the same time that it emphasises the scale of racist, colonial discourses, it also emphasises their ubiquitous presence in everyday social interactions, institutional functions and academic activities. Having highlighted the scale of the problem, it demands action from those working in related fields, and encourages them to ask (more) questions about representation, knowledge production, narrative control, privilege and position. Many of the concerns raised in the *Cadaan Studies* movement are closely related to many of the concerns of this research: the intersections and implications of power, representational practices, narrative access, ‘voice’ – and I return to the themes and theories that it raises throughout this thesis. Simultaneously, in the context of this particular project the movement brings both the research and my position as a white researcher working with Somali people into sharp focus and asks for (at least) close

consideration of its questions, which I begin in the sections below. To do so, I first unpick some of the movement's theoretical threads.

2.2.2 Following the theoretical and ethical threads of *Cadaan Studies*

The themes of the *Cadaan Studies* movement draws on concepts, arguments and theories interested both in the consequences of colonial power for those it oppresses, and in the critique and challenging of its systems. The concept of 'whiteness' as a dominant social organiser is of central influence in the movement. As I discuss below, the term has provenance in the antiracist scholarship of people of colour (Du Bois, [1935] 1999, Fanon, 2001, Fanon, 2008), and has also been considerably critiqued by Black Feminist scholars and activists (Hill-Collins, 2002, hooks, 1990, hooks, 1992, Ahmed, 2007). Also of influence in the movement are the arguments made by 'postcolonial' scholars, such as Spivak, Said and Bhabha, about colonial power, narrative control and subalternity (Spivak, [1985] 2010, Said, 1977, Bhabha, 2013). Closely related to this scholarship, the work of 'indigenous' academics and activists is interested in exposing the workings of colonial power, emphasising the experiences of those it oppresses, and developing critiques with which the system might be 'decolonised' (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). As this thesis is implicated both in the privileges of whiteness and colonial power, I consider these arguments in more detail below.

- **Whiteness**

As a concept of critique, 'whiteness' has gained currency throughout the late-twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, especially through the scholarship and labour of people of colour, particularly Black Feminist scholars (including hooks, 1992, Hill-Collins,

2002, Yancy, 2008, Carby, 1997, Ahmed, 2007, Ahmed, 2013a). It was first used in analysis by Du Bois in 1935, who referred to the 'wages of whiteness' to describe the enduring legacy of slavery and systemic racism on the black population in the US (Du Bois, [1935] 1999). The term 'whiteness' condenses the workings of race, racialisation and power, and is used as in Aidid's argumentation above to critique the processes and effects that produce, endorse and obscure whiteness as a dominant social position. 'Whiteness' can be understood as a product of racialisation, a system of classification mired in racist, colonial logics (Warmington, 2009) that see a combination of skin colour, physical appearance, ethnicity, culture and other social attributes (Gunaratnam, 2013) as signifiers of social value. 'Whiteness' uses these 'markers' of 'race' to maintain systems of (racially-biased) power and representation (Abdi, 2016) which positions those racialised as white as socially dominant, and those racialised as minority ethnic as socially inferior (Gunaratnam, 2013). White privilege, Lyubansky observes, is 'the privilege to live one's life without ever needing to be aware of one's whiteness and how it might be impacting their life' (Lyubansky, 2011, drawing on McIntosh, 1989). White privilege in this context not only involves the benefits of racialised dominance, such as social mobility or opportunity, but also a systemic occlusion of the same benefits' causal relationship to whiteness. In the context of *Cadaan Studies*, the term is used to foreground the privilege that has enabled white scholars to dominate knowledge production about Somali people, and the system erasure and occlusion that this has enabled. As I discuss below, this clearly is in need of consideration throughout this research.

- **Decolonising research**

By explicitly highlighting the enduring contemporary consequences of colonial systems enforced upon Somalia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the *Cadaan Studies* movement situates its critique of whiteness within the mechanisms of institutionalised, global domination. In doing so, it allows its critique to be read alongside the scholarship of Said, who argues that the representational practices of colonial systems enforce a cultural, racial and ideological binary between the West and ‘the Other’, enabling the former to claim dominance over the latter (Said, 1977). It can also be read alongside Spivak’s work on subalternity, which highlights the patriarchal and racist power dynamics upon which colonial systems rely, producing overlapping, racial and gendered social exclusions (Spivak, [1985] 2010). Both Said and Spivak warn specifically of the potentially harmful role of scholarship in propping up, or being implicated in, these systems of domination (Spivak, [1985] 2010, Said, 1977).

Developing these critiques of colonial power and inequality, scholarship by indigenous⁶ scholars presents criticisms of colonial dominance from the perspectives of the peoples it seeks to subordinate (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). It draws on antiracist and radical feminism to make visible and deconstruct both the broad and banal systems of domination and the long-reaching effects on populations who have been disabused of their territories, cultures and rights by white settler populations. However, while the differences between Somali and indigenous contexts must be noted, there are points of commonality that can be placed in dialogue. Aidid’s argument above makes the case for the impact of whiteness and colonial systems on representations of, and knowledge production about, Somalis and Somalia; indigenous scholarship speaks directly to these critiques. Linda Tuhiwai Smith argues:

⁶ Not a monolithic group of people (Te Punga Somerville 2016)

It appals us that the West can desire, extract and claim ownership of our ways of knowing, our imagery, the things we created and developed and then simultaneously reject the people who created and developed those ideas and seek to deny them further opportunities to be creators of their own culture and own nations. It angers us when practices linked to the last century, and the centuries before that, are still employed to deny the validity of indigenous peoples' claim to existence.

(Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, p. 1)

Tuhiwai Smith's work highlights the harm caused by unreflexive, colonially-rooted and institutionally-orientated research and research methods to indigenous peoples (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). It also sets out arguments and suggestions for how scholarship might think about 'decolonising' its activities.

In this context, Tuck and Yang call for a reconsideration of the role of research in the lives, experiences and issues faced by minority groups (Tuck and Yang, 2014). Too often, they argue, research and its institutional provenances only enables and reasserts exclusionary and occlusive conditions. They note Spivak's charge that scholarship on minority groups often achieves only the 'ventriloquism of the speaking subaltern', and serves only to concretise structural communicative barriers (Spivak, [1985] 2010, p. 27); they note also that should the subaltern 'speak' in scholarship, she is 'invited only to speak her pain' (Tuck and Yang, 2014, p. 224). Valorised (Morris, 2010), and made the exotic object of the intellectual gaze, Tuck and Yang argue, minority groups are excluded from public and communicative spaces, whilst scholarship, complicit in (post)colonial systems of domination and representation, benefits from their exclusion.

- **The implications of *Cadaan Studies* for this thesis**

In the aftermath of the initial *Cadaan Studies* online argument, its originators experienced significant backlash. Aidid reports that some in the ‘Somali Studies’ discipline accused the movement of ‘racism’ (against white people), whilst others sought to entirely ignore the movement and its calls to action (Aidid, 2015b). At the annual ‘Somali Studies’ conference, she found herself a pariah, accused of being ‘disruptive’, ‘disrespectful’ and unethical (Aidid, 2015b). Those who occupied the white, paternal norm appeared to have especially strong reactions against the movement’s work.

As a white researcher working with Somali people, I find the work of the *Cadaan Studies* challenging because it lays bare my own white privilege and the systems of privilege from which this research has benefitted (discussed more below). However, at the same time that it causes discomfort – and indeed, precisely *because* it causes discomfort – I find the movement, necessary, timely and urgently engaging. Sara Ahmed argues that feelings of ‘uncomfiness’ are integral to feminist, decolonising, antiracist work, especially for those in positions of privilege (Ahmed, 2010). She urges scholars to follow those feelings to the root and ask, ‘where those feelings come from in the circuits of power, place and history, and what these feelings mean for ongoing relations of power and belonging’ (Jones, 2014, p. 84) so that they might act to avoid reproducing them. I find this ‘discomfort’ of use especially in an ethnographic context, which places so much centralised emphasis on the subjectivity of the researcher. Butler suggests that deconstructive, feminist research carries an ethics of responsibility that is embedded in the subject’s ability to give a situated account of oneself: ‘if the ‘I’ cannot be effectively disjoined from the impress of social life, then ethics will surely not only presuppose rhetoric [...] but social critique’ (Butler, 2005, p. 135). This ethical

imperative, she argues, 'requires us to risk ourselves [...] to be undone by another is a primary necessity, an anguish, to be sure, but also a change to be addressed, claimed, bound to what is not me, but also to be moved, to be prompted to act, to address myself elsewhere and so to vacate the self-sufficient 'I' as a kind of possession' (Butler, 2005, p. 136). How then, might my social background, experience and concerns as a researcher impact this research? How might the institutional context of this research project implicate the research? More importantly, how might it impact those with whom I have worked?

2.2.3 *Cadaan Studies, this thesis and me*

As I have noted above and will discuss further below, as a white researcher I encounter a number of privileges, especially in the context of working with Somali groups. I am English, and have a social background somewhere between working and lower middle class and in terms of resources, language and citizenship, this also gives me a degree of social privilege not experienced by those with whom I worked. These privileges are at times made more complex by being a white English woman in Glasgow, where my middle-English accent 'marks' me out of place to varying degrees. At times, it may have afforded me privilege because it was associated with 'authority'; at other times it may have disadvantaged social interactions.⁷ My position as a white researcher in this project brings a complexity of racialised and power dynamics that threaten to obscure or distract from the voices and experiences of the Somali people with whom I worked. In the sections below, I lay out some of the practices I have attempted to develop to address the questions of privilege and occlusion in this research project. However,

⁷ For instance, in situations where Englishness was associated with colonialism, or in other situations, where my accent and English background marked me out of place on class and national terms (Bond et al. 2010)

before I move on, and in the interests of visibility and an accountable 'I', I pay a little more attention to the consequences of whiteness on this research.

- **Whiteness, unseen privilege and institutional complicities**

Despite its commitment to unpack and make visible some of the workings of power and complicity in Somali people's communicative experiences in Glasgow, the research is likely to benefit from 'unseen' privileges of whiteness. Within institutional structures, authorship by a white researcher is likely to experience privileges of authority and access. Jonsson, whose research builds on the work of feminists of colour to critique institutionalised whiteness, unpacks the implications of unseen white privilege:

Operating within an institutionally white and racist feminist academic context, my position as a white feminist academic writing on race has effects. White feminists are more likely to listen to me than feminists of colour when I write about racism. They may cite my work on racism within feminism and race more than that of a feminist of colour. [...] Thus my stated aim of challenging white dominance within British feminist academia does not necessarily do so in material, structural ways, in fact, it may after all be my whiteness that is most effectively reproduced.

(Jonsson, 2015, p. 46)

As Jonsson observes, the effects of white privilege are not only about unequal racialised advantages, but are also about how these advantages work to obscure the voices, experiences and labour of people of colour. Some of the potential obscuring that she identifies above also has potential to occur in this research. For instance, I mobilise the work and scholarship of Somali people, Black Feminist and indigenous scholars and engage with their arguments and theories. Conclusions I make therefore have the

potential to benefit from white privilege and not only obscure their intellectual provenances but also the labour, structural discriminations and disadvantages that have been experienced in their creation. As this work draws on the voices of Somali people not involved in the Academy, this dynamic also needs to be considered further. This research is to be submitted in completion of a doctorate and I therefore stand to benefit from their contribution; however, to what extent is the research of reciprocal use to participants? There certainly is potential for the research to reinforce hierarchies of knowledge production and power: for instance, because of white privilege, my commentary might be readily accepted as ‘expert’, and produce a dynamic in which I am seen to speak for Somali people, and for Somali people to be seen as ‘voiceless’. Liberatore argues that these questions of representation and ‘voice’ must be asked in the context of the increasingly securitised Academy. She suggests that the institutionalised obligations of UK universities to the Government’s ‘Prevent’ programme makes them complicit in discourses of securitisation that seek to frame the ‘Muslim subject’ within increasingly narrow, liberal parameters (Liberatore, 2017, Chapter 9). With this dynamic in mind, she asks, ‘how does one write about Somali [people] in Britain from a knowledge-producing institution that is complicit in this process of reforming Muslim subjectivities? [...] How does one avoid denying Somali women's subjectivities?’ (Liberatore, 2017, p. 255). These are questions that must be extended to my own research, and with the decolonising tenants of the *Cadaan Studies* movement in mind, I try to address these throughout this thesis.

Figure 2.1: Unpacking White Privilege

Peggy McIntosh's *Invisible Knapsack* (McIntosh, 1989) lists 50 daily white privileges she experiences as a white researcher. Below, I list those I think particularly relevant to this thesis, with my own additions in italics

Because of white privilege...

11. I can be casual about whether or not to listen to another person's voice
21. I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.
 - (a) *and it isn't seen as a problem if I am seen to speak for people of another racial group*
 - (b) *my research can be seen to 'stand in' for the voices of the people in it*
22. I can remain oblivious of the language and customs of persons of colour who constitute the world's majority without feeling in my culture any penalty for such oblivion
 - (a) *I do not hear/see the experiences of participants as racially or religiously related. I participate in the occlusion of such experiences, whilst being protected by my various privileges*
 - (b) *I centralise the use of English language without fear of being challenged on its use / making visible its monopoly*
23. I can criticise our government and talk about how much I fear its politics and behaviour without being seen as a cultural outsider *[or incurring the same public or personal penalties]*
30. If I declare there is a racial issue at hand [...] my race will lend me more credibility [...] than a person of colour will have
31. I can choose to ignore developments in minority writing and minority activist programs, or disparage them, or learn from them, but in any case I can find ways to be more or less protected from negative consequences of any of these choices.
 - (a) *I reinforce traditional whiteness/research paradigms by producing institutionally-sponsored information about minority peoples*
34. I can worry about racism without being seen as self-interested or self-seeking *[and without the same experiential or emotional impact]*

2.2.4 Some preliminary approaches

The critiques both of the *Cadaan Studies* movement and decolonising scholarship emphasise that questions of research practice, power and ethics are also questions of

‘voice’. Decolonising scholarship argues that in the same way that other institutions – whiteness, colonisation, class and patriarchy – enable some and subjugate others, research also produces hierarchies of power and privilege. Indeed, decolonising scholarship argues, the hierarchies of power and privileges produced by research are implicated in the production of inequalities in other institutions too. In this context, the movement argues, the research process can serve not only to empower the Academy above its subjects, but also to empower the Academy at the expense of its subjects. Hierarchies of power and privilege extend across the research process: from ethics, to research design, to ‘fieldwork’ and methods, to analysis and writing. In the same way that all of these processes demand a consideration of the position and privilege of the researcher, the ethical implications of the practices involved and the practical implications of these conclusions, they also demand a consideration of the dynamics of ‘voice’. To what extent does the research (re)produce a hierarchy of ‘voice’? To what extent does the research enable or inhibit the voices with whom it works? To what extent has it considered vocal practices other than its own? What accesses to narrative and knowledge does it provide? Who represents whom? And how? Whose voices are enabled and whose are occluded in the processes and result of the research?

The process of answering these questions returns to the question of ethics. For me, and for this research, it crystalises in questions that ask, what is the role of research? And what specifically, is the role of *this* research? Following the argument of the *Cadaan Studies* movement above, the first role of this research is to consider the implications of power, privilege and ‘voice’. Hugman et al suggest that in research (such as this) that involves an imbalance of power and privilege, those who hold positions of power have a responsibility to 'create relationships between researchers and participants in which there is a more equal exchange of ideas and of the benefits to be

gained by being involved in the project' (Hugman et al., 2011, p. 1279). In this research, I occupy a number of privileges, both social and institutional, which therefore must come under consideration. However, the imbalance in vocal equality cannot be simply resolved by 'empowering' Somali voices to have privilege above my own – this way lies dynamics of 'helping', 'saving', 'valorising' or 'demystifying' Somali people, cultures and voices, which only confirm them as the object of my gaze, and the subjects of wider systems of domination (Abu-Lughod, 1990). Rather, moves towards an 'equal exchange' of voices in research must do more than simply pay 'lip service' to the process. Phipps argues that research needs to find

ways for opening up a space where the subaltern cannot just speak [...] but where the principles of ethical research dialogue can be formed and framed in such ways as to accord space for researcher and researched, subaltern and dominant researcher to create together and to continue to continuously negotiate meanings and dynamics [...] such that the speech and speakerhoods may debate, dialogue, translate, interpret and chorus their understandings and hopes for their particular intercultural world

(Phipps, 2013, p. 18)

Phipps argues that one of the ways for research to do this is to 'bear witness' to the experiences of the people with whom it works, and the conditions in which they arise (Phipps and Saunders, 2009, p. 369). The role of the witness is not to 'speak for' those with whom one works, but to make visible the conditions and situations of one's own position, whilst putting forward the activities and experiences of those with whom one works. Drawing on the critiques of decolonising scholarship above, I would also suggest that the role of research is to support and enable spaces of narrative production,

in which the people with whom the researcher works have access to, and input into, their own representations.

If Phipps's suggestions are extended to the particular context of this research, I see the role of the research thus: (1) to reflexively bear witness to the experiences and opinions of Somali people in Glasgow whilst making visible the conditions of witnessing; (2) to provide narrative-creating spaces to which Somali people have access and input; (3) to provide spaces that dismantle a 'hierarchy of knowledge', in which Somali-led narratives and voices can 'speak to' the experts and commentators that speak about them; (4) led by Somali experiences, to make visible hierarchies of power and privilege, and to articulate and foreground their complexity; (5) to establish preliminary narratives from which or against which Somali people can continue to articulate their experiences. This work calls for both reflexive, decolonising and adaptable research practice and for careful and deconstructive writing and representational practices. I discuss the former in Part 2.3 and the latter in Part 2.4.

2.3 Ethnography, fieldwork and research practice

The critique of the *Cadaan Studies* movement, alongside postcolonial, decolonising and feminist scholarship, emphasises the need for researchers to consider the effects of social privilege and institutionalised power throughout all elements of their work. This chapter considers their implications for research practice and methods, and discusses how they applied to the fieldwork that informs this thesis.

2.3.1 Towards decolonising, ethnographic practice

Both the *Cadaan Studies* movement and decolonising scholarship emphasise the strong association between research ethics, practice and ‘voice’. In this context, I have endeavoured to combine a decolonising approach with ethnographic practice. I have situated the research within an ethnographic framework because it is a discipline primarily concern with ‘voice’ in a situated and social sense. Blommaert and Dong argue that ethnography straddles two points of focus: the first, of the communicative relationships between people (Blommaert and Dong, 2010); the second, of situation, environment and 'being there' (Blommaert and Dong, 2010, see also Hannerz, 2003). Blommaert and Dong argue that social interactions can be understood as meaningful only in terms of ‘the ethnographic principle of situatedness’, in which ‘wider patterns of human social behaviour, and intricate connections between the various aspects [must also] be specified (Blommaert and Dong, 2010, p. 8). In contemporary research, ethnographic methods frequently appear across disciplines that are concerned with the social relationships between people. This has created two strands of ethnographic research: the first, which makes use of ethnographic methods such as participant observation; the second, which treat ethnographic concerns of ‘voice’ and ‘situatedness’ as paradigmatic (Blommaert and Dong, 2010, p. 6). I situate this research within the

latter approach, building on the implications of a situated, vocal focus to inform an ontology and epistemology that foreground grounded, communicative acts as categories both of knowledge and meaning-making. I would suggest that this approach is sympathetic to the concerns of a decolonising approach, as it anticipates heterogeneity, plural understandings of meaning and reality, and a scepticism towards ‘top-down’ approaches.

However, if I am to treat ethnography as paradigmatic rather than only methodological, I must also acknowledge its disciplinary roots in anthropology. Founded in a post-Darwinian context, anthropology combined a concern with ‘social and cultural evolution’ (Monaghan and Just, 2000:1) with pretensions to an ‘objective science of a knowable [social] world’ (Moore, 1994) to study peoples in the southern and eastern hemispheres. As Aidid's (Aidid, 2015b) commentary (Part 2.2) highlights, throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the discipline was implicated in the ‘technologies of power’ (Kapteijns, 2004) and the colonial projects of the West (Moore, 1994). From the mid-twentieth century onwards, scholarship began to acknowledge and make visible anthropology's role in the maintenance of social inequalities. At the same time, scholars such as Geertz, Clifford, Marcus and Fischer (Geertz, 2016, Marcus and Fischer, 1999, Clifford, 1986) deconstructed claims to ‘scientific’ concretism, and drew attention to the way in which the researcher was deeply implicated in both ‘the field’ and their subsequent accounts of ‘field’ (Clifford, 1986, pp. 6-8). Taking inspiration from the poststructuralist movement, Clifford argued, ‘even the best ethnographic texts [...] are systems or economies of truth. Power and history work through them, in ways the authors cannot fully control’ (Clifford, 1986, p. 7).

The cultural critique of anthropology from the 1970s onwards grounded the distinct ethnographic concerns of ‘voice’, situatedness and reflexivity (Agger, 1991, p.

126) and allowed a distinction to form between the three. Ingold argues that contemporary anthropology ties ethnographic method to broad-ranging theories of social and cultural reality, whilst ethnography-as-paradigm is primarily concerned with the reality-making that arises in the field (Ingold, 2006). As such, ethnography encourages a sustained interrogation of the researcher's position throughout the duration of the research (Marcus and Fischer, 1999); it also promotes an interest in narrative creation, in narrative stakeholders, narrative control and narrative medium (Clifford, 1986, Phipps and Saunders, 2009). In this sense, ethnographic concerns speak to similar concerns of the decolonising critiques of *Cadaaan Studies* and other movements. However, to what extent can the two concerns be equivocated or translated? Though ethnographic accounts are often reflexive and discuss the role of the researcher in their production (Griffiths, 1999, Liberatore, 2013, Piacentini, 2012), they less frequently talk about power and institutional complicity, unless combined with antiracist, feminist, deconstructionist or decolonising perspectives (Rashid, 2013, Abu-Lughod, 1990, Mahmood, 2011). In the meantime, the traditional ethnographic practices of participant/observation and individually-authored texts continue to present the researcher/researched dynamic as a norm (Law, 2004), whilst formalised fieldwork practices - such as consent forms or audio/visual data collection - can inflict institutional pressure on people often especially vulnerable to institutional mechanisms (see Phipps, 2013). In both cases above, uncritically applied ethnographic methods have the potential to perpetuate - or make worse - already uneven power dynamics. In both cases too, narrative and knowledge production might be seen as 'commodities' (Hugman et al., 2011, p. 1277) for the researcher.

A number of practices and methods that seek to address the inequalities in the researcher/researched relationship in ethnography have emerged, including participatory

(see below), activist (Naples, 2003, Reid and Frisbee, 2013) and action-research (Reid and Frisbee, 2013) methods. Though these methods are often combined and related, participatory research emphasises the need to rethink the dynamics of research design and production. In this vein, feminist ethnography (Mohanty, 2003, Abu-Lughod, 2002, Naples, 2003) has mobilised ethnographic reflexivity to interrogate dynamics of 'domination and repression' (Naples, 2003, p. 37) and has pushed for research to be a partnership of co-creation rather than a top-down imposition.

2.3.2 Fieldwork: a summary

Decolonising, ethnographic research therefore asks that researchers establish a partnership with those with whom they work, in which positions of power and privilege are visible, discussed and unpicked. This means that the groups and individuals involved in the research have input into its shape, direction and concerns, and have access to and involvement in the narratives created therein.

The idea for this research had come independently of the doctoral project, as a result of prior reading and experience of working with minority groups in other cities in the UK. However, though this reading and experience had raised questions about the extent to which Somali people 'had voice' in Glasgow, it was not grounded in or informed first-hand by the experiences of the groups and individuals who lived in Glasgow at the time. I did not know if the topic of 'voice' would be of interest or use to Somali groups in Glasgow; nor did I know whether a research project on 'voice' was needed or welcome. If it was, I did not know how groups and individuals would wish it to proceed. In addition, I had only recently arrived in Glasgow and had had no contact with Somali people in the city. The first part of this project therefore largely involved a

process of getting in touch with individuals and groups, establishing whether the idea was of interest or use, discussing how it might work in practice and building working relationships with them.

I began this part of the project in November 2013. I initially found it very difficult to get in touch with anyone in Glasgow with a Somali background. To begin with, I started by looking for community groups with a public presence; however, of the few I identified, their contact details were out of date and any active public presences were non-existent. Aware that groups perhaps participated in city life in different ways, and aware also that my local knowledge was lacking, I began volunteering with community support groups. Over the period of a year, I met volunteers, practitioners and academics, who kindly put me in touch with some Somali individuals and groups. With these contacts, I was also able to ask groups and individuals for recommendations for further contacts. With a better knowledge of Somali community dynamics, I was also able to independently get in touch with other groups. In the course of my fieldwork, I ended up working with three community groups and a number of individuals with ‘majority’ Somali backgrounds. Throughout the fieldwork, I was also in touch with a ‘minority’ Somali group – the Bajuni campaign – whose activities remained distinct from the majority population.⁸ On account of their different social and cultural background, the Somali identity of the minority group was sometimes open to dispute (see Part 4.3); however, the group themselves strongly identified as Somali. Somali identity is highly complex and often layered (see Part 4). Throughout this thesis, I have tried to avoid imposing boundaries of ‘Somali-ness’ on those with whom I

⁸ Somali social infrastructure is informed by a system of patrilineal descent. Groups that have descent within this lineage system can be considered ‘majority’ groups. Groups that do not have lineal descent can be considered ‘minority’ groups. In Somali societies, lineage has often informed social hierarchies, inclusions and exclusions. I discuss this in further detail in Parts 4.1 and 4.3.

worked; rather I have given precedence to the categories of belonging with which people primarily identify.

Once I had got in touch with individuals and groups in Glasgow, we worked together to establish the extent to which they wished to be involved with the research. Though I had ambitions of in-depth, coproduced projects with all of those with whom I worked, I soon found that this was not necessarily desired by, or possible, with some groups. People also had different social concerns, priorities, experiences and languages, which demanded flexible research practices (discussed below). Working together, participants and I established scales and dynamics of coproduction to suit each circumstance. Overall, this means that the thesis is informed by a wide variety of practices and projects, including long-term, coproduced work (the Bajuni campaign), short-term, co-produced projects (with some individuals), and contained moments of coproduction and methodological flexibility (some community groups). The research is also informed by ethnographic participant observation, in which I spent time with groups and individuals and attended community and public events. *Table 2.3.1* gives an illustrative summary of people with whom I worked, and the type of work we undertook together, and I discuss these dynamics in greater depth below.

Table 2.1: Fieldwork practices with groups, individuals and events in Glasgow

Fieldwork	Participants/description	Project / Interaction?	Voices?
Group 1	One group, split into two-sub groups according to gender	Two separate conversation and learning sessions. Sessions were created together to teach me about being Somali in Glasgow. Sessions were in Somali and interpreted (see below)	Consent was given for me to audio record the discussions on my mobile phone.
Group 2	A mixed group of 16-30 year-olds	Two sessions: one with the group organisers, and one with a larger group. At the second session, the group leaders requested that we run an informal discussion group together.	Consent was given for me to audio record the discussions on my mobile phone.
Group 3	An informal group run by women	I attended a series of group meetings and events held by the group. I helped with group activities and provided general support at larger events.	The organisation's work was confidential. I made fieldnotes, but did not record conversations aurally or textually.
Bajuni Campaign	A small group of young men from the Bajuni Islands	I worked with the campaign in various roles. I provided research support, blog support and attended a series of meetings with the campaigners and their legal representation. I also attended a number of social gatherings.	A co-produced narrative about the campaigners' experiences in Glasgow
Individuals	A mix of young Somali men and women	Conversations over coffee, attendance at events and gatherings and some more formal interviews. Assisting individuals with job applications, reference requests and grant applications. Working with some individuals to create a funding application for a community storytelling project	With consent, some conversations were audio recorded. For others I made fieldnotes after the event. An (unfinished) coproduced narrative from project work
General fieldwork	A mixture of Somali people in Glasgow in a more general sense. People and institutions in Scotland or the UK with which Somali people came into contact.	Attendance at community events, spending time with groups and individuals. Meetings and conversations with, observations of and collection of documentation of institutions with connections to Somali people in Glasgow.	Fieldnotes and observations. Collection of texts, articles and speeches.

I brought the fieldwork to a close at the end of 2015, though I have remained in touch with some groups and individuals since. Due to the nature of ethnographic work, it is difficult (and perhaps undesirable) to ‘quantify’ those with whom I worked. Throughout the course of the work, I came into contact with a number of people who do not directly feature in this thesis, but who inform it in a more general sense. In a more direct context, the thesis is informed by conversations, interviews and work with 35 (17 men and 17 women) people of majority Somali backgrounds and six (one woman, five men) people of minority backgrounds. Where possible, I have endeavoured to balance the input of contributors in terms of gender, generation and social background. The research has been shaped and informed by the different backgrounds, voices and priorities of those with whom I worked. I discuss how I worked with this variety of experience below.

2.3.3 Fieldwork practices

The plurality of the groups, individuals and interests with which I worked called for a degree of flexibility in my fieldwork practices, alongside a constant process of practice-based (re)evaluation. As a researcher, I occupied positions of privilege across all the groups with whom I worked, but my privilege could impact different groups in different ways. In the meantime, in terms of research practice, what worked for one group might not work for another due to the personalities of the people involved, or the environment in which it would take place. In this section, I discuss how I approached some of these issues.

- **Research ethics as research practice**

As I discuss in Part 2.2, decolonising and feminist scholarship asks that researchers think about their work in terms of an ethical whole. Often in research projects, a consideration of research ethics is consigned to questions about consent and ‘data collection’ which, whilst unquestionably important, do not encourage a consideration of how ethics affect other elements of research. Hugman comments that mechanisms that, ‘even positively [seek] to ‘do no harm’ can become a well-meant but empty aspiration if [participants] are put at further risk by the very process of the research’ (Hugman et al., 2011, p. 1271). As I started the research, I was aware that many of those with whom I might work occupied vulnerable social positions that could be made more vulnerable through the process of research. Not all vulnerabilities were the same, and all required consideration. As appeal-rights-exhausted asylum seekers, the Bajuni campaigners were in particularly precarious positions. They had few financial or social resources and their battle for leave to remain had exacted a toll on their health and relationships. In the meantime, because their cases were unresolved, they remained at risk of deportation or detention. In this context, the question of ‘harm’ was very acute: was there potential for my research to exacerbate an already very difficult situation? In the context of their immigration cases, to what extent could any research be co-opted against them?

Other situations presented different questions about research ethics. Some of the people from the majority Somali population also remained subject to immigration control, whilst many had been through the asylum system. In the meantime, others were socioeconomically vulnerable and dependent either on support systems within the Somali community or upon welfare provision. Within the context of Scotland, the population also experienced social and cultural disadvantages (see Part 3.1). For many,

participation in a research project presented a cost: in terms of the money involved in travel, in terms of the time they would be giving up, in terms of pressure participation placed on caring, faith-based or other social duties they might have, all of which come under additional pressure in the context of socioeconomic disadvantage. In these circumstances, my position as a researcher created the potential for very uneven dynamics of privilege and power in the research context: what ‘cost’ me little in terms of time and money may ‘cost’ participants comparatively more; where I may stand to gain from their participation (see Part 2.2 above), the potential benefit of the research to them may be uncertain. At worst, participation in research might lead to unwanted attention or further misrepresentation. To what extent can research design account for these dynamics? How?

To begin, I tried to work through some of the issues with the groups involved. For instance, with the Bajuni campaigners, though the question of co-option remained a strong concern, it was agreed that a research element might be of use to the campaign if it could provide information and resources that they were unable to previously access. We agreed that I would work with the group on a participatory basis and help the campaign develop their arguments and blog. Whilst the group retained their concerns about co-option, this dynamic meant that they retained some control over any public output, whilst gaining a little from the resources to which I had access. To address concerns about privacy and anonymity, I worked with Heriot-Watt’s ethics officer to establish a process of anonymisation. We agreed that I would keep all digital materials on an encrypted storage device and any documents were to be kept securely and discreetly. I removed any identifying details from field notes as I created them, and continued this practice in my subsequent work with all groups. With majority Somali groups, I tried to work with participants according to the situation and dynamic. In

circumstances where participants were at a financial disadvantage, I covered costs of travel and participation. Though some scholarship criticises the ‘payment’ of participants on the grounds of ‘neutrality’ (Head, 2009), I felt it was necessary at least to acknowledge the real-term ‘costs’ of participation (travel, time and so on) in some circumstances. I also tried to provide assistance to participants in other ways: by volunteering, by providing references for job applications, helping with university applications or providing contacts to organisations. I also tried to establish a dynamic in which the research process was agreed by everyone involved. Discussions with groups and individuals about the design, direction and point of any potential work together started to think about the dynamics of access and control involved in any research process. As I discuss in more detail below, the scope of work with each group was subject to particular conditions, so the agreements we reached varied according to our circumstances.

- **Informed consent**

As I describe above, to try and respond to the ethical questions raised by my research, I tried to foreground research practices that responded to the inequalities of privilege and power embedded in the research dynamic. This not only applied to how the research was framed and practiced according to the broad themes of narrative access and control, co-design and discussion, but also to the infrastructure and mechanisms of the research process.

The process of gaining informed consent from those involved in a research project is central to research in social sciences disciplines (Wiles et al., 2007). Informed consent places responsibility on the researcher to discuss with participants 'in meaningful terms' what the research is about, who is conducting and supporting it and

how it might be used (BSA, 2002). As I have discussed, participatory research practice suggests that this process is extended to research design so that participants not only grant permission for their involvement but also define what their involvement entails. Ethics guidelines at Heriot-Watt University usually require for the researcher to gain written consent from those involved with a research project (Heriot-Watt University, 2017). However, in a context where many participants remained vulnerable to institutional bureaucracies, the demand for written consent had the potential to exact further institutional pressure (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, Tuck and Yang, 2014). Reflecting on the dynamics of ethics and consent in her own work with refugee groups, Phipps argues,

It would be wrong and harmful for me to enact a second destruction of home, for the sake of a tick on a box on a form. The idea, for example, of using an interview schedule or a questionnaire, of plonking a tape recorder on a table, explaining the place of a consent form and asking for a signature [...] enacts bureaucratic procedures well documented by scholars of colonialism

(Phipps, 2013, p. 19)

After discussion with Heriot-Watt's ethics officer, I decided to ask participants for verbal rather than written consent. Following the precedent of written consent, I would continue to discuss the scope and implications of the research, but avoid entrenching the process on paper. I found that in practice, this approach steered away from a simple withholding or granting of consent and instead promoted an environment in which the research could be discussed and negotiated. Whilst the process retained its institutional roots, it sought to undo a hierarchy of knowledge production by creating an environment in which the dynamic between 'the researcher' and participants was a little more equitable. Once participants had given their consent to be involved in the project I

provided my contact details, so if they wished we could discuss the research further, or so that they could withdraw their participation.

- **Field notes and (not) recording the field**

Ethnographic practice is known for participant observation, a method of working in ‘the field’ which combines participation in activities whilst also observing and often recording them (Van Maanen, 2011). Experiences might be recorded in a number of ways: through audio or visual recording, through note-taking or through illustration. This is usually accompanied by ‘field notes’ made after an event or interaction, which record the researcher’s impressions and provide space for them to reflect upon their involvement. Piacentini comments, field notes might involve ‘expectations, sensitizing themes, theories and concepts, whether these have been formally thought through or in their embryonic form’ (Piacentini, 2012, p. 113).

I decided early on in my research to avoid taking notes or images of my interactions with participants in ‘the field’. For those particularly vulnerable to institutional bureaucracies – such as the immigration system, social services or the welfare state – note-taking and photographs, like the practice of written consent above, enacted processes that were associated with institutional surveillance and control. I felt that note-taking and overt forms of recording had the potential to exacerbate existing inequalities of privilege and power, and were inappropriate to participatory dynamics. Note-taking and photographs emphasises a dynamic in which participants were the object of my gaze; to record people’s activities as they occurred was therefore to perform the very dynamic that I was trying to undo. I found that audio-recording was far less intrusive, especially if done using the banality of a mobile phone, but I always

asked participants if I could record their comments and emphasised they could withdraw their comments at any time.

Away from meetings and events, and for my own records, I made notes on the day's interactions. I developed some of these into longer reflections on my own involvement and position in the activities, and often found this process useful in unpicking the dynamics of privilege that arose (discussed further below). As well as prosaic note-taking, and initially due to a busy fieldwork schedule and additional duties at Heriot-Watt, I also developed a habit of audio note-taking. This allowed me to immediately record events whilst I was driving or walking elsewhere. Though this practice began as a result of time-constraints, I soon found it was ethnographically useful: because the 'audio notes' captured the background noise of my journeys, and caught my mood in my voice, they provided insights into the 'immediacy' of fieldwork long after the event. In addition, their audio form created a more dialogical environment in which to record and consider the field. Mazanderani, who has employed a similar technique in her own research agrees:

the recording of "voice notes" enables the researcher to "speak back" to themselves, generating valuable material to reflect upon when analysing and writing up one's data. By privileging voice, this companion method potentially elucidates the conscious, and unconscious, self-censorship we impose when relying solely upon a textual rendering of experience.

(Mazanderani, 2017, p. 80)

A combination of written and oral note-taking throughout the fieldwork process allowed me to undertake an ongoing process of analysis and reflection. This created a 'dialogical' relationship between fieldwork, research practices and writing as they progressed (Lichterman, 2002, p. 30).

- **Negotiating vocal media**

The combination of the decolonising research practices of this ethnography and its thematic concern with ‘voice’ foregrounded a concern for how the voices of the participants might be included and framed throughout the research. This was a multi-stranded concern: ‘voice’ might be understood in terms of direct, situated and oral expression; it might also be mediated in a different form, such as text. These first two concerns require consideration about how vocal media might be recorded and represented; they also relate to the final concern (already discussed above) about narrative access and control. Throughout my fieldwork, I often found that the medium in which people chose to be recorded itself was related to narrative access and control.

For instance, anxious to avoid contexts that they associated with Home Office practices, the Bajuni campaigners explicitly requested that I did not aurally or visually record our work together.⁹ We decided instead that we would find alternative means of presenting their voices. Some of the campaigners kept a public blog to record their experiences, and agreed that its content could be used to talk about the campaign. In their experiences with the Home Office, the campaigners had encountered situations where their oral testimonies had been lost or (wilfully) misunderstood. The textual medium of the blog entries allowed them to record their experiences in a visible form and allowed them to write their own narrative. In this situation, I simply kept a record of the campaigners’ blog and made notes on how it related to our experiences in the campaign. This dynamic meant that though I might author pieces about the campaign without direct input from the campaigners, the narrative structure that informed my discussion was directly related to the work of the campaign.

⁹ The campaigners had been subject to a series of interviews that had been aurally recorded (see Part 4.3)

In other situations, narrative control and access arose in different media and circumstances. With two of the groups, I encountered a dynamic where participatory research was either not desired (Group 1) or possible (Group 2). For instance, Group 1 had some experience of doing research with institutions, and preferred to participate in research through focus group environments. This presented a fairly controlled environment in which to interact with group members and I was initially concerned that this dynamic felt quite far-removed from 'coproducing' practices.¹⁰ With Group 2, I found that the dynamics of coproduction also relied on resources and privileges that could not be assumed. Group 2 had very limited funding and was run entirely by volunteers who also had families and full-time jobs. Though the organisation leaders were open to the idea of a longer-term cocreated project, they did not have the time or resources to be able to do so. Meanwhile, whilst I was able to provide some funded support to our work, this remained limited. Though in both these cases, sustained, coproducing work was not possible at organisational level, I wondered whether I could work towards it on a small and albeit restricted scale with the groups themselves. Instead of formal 'group discussions', I approached the groups as a learning environment, with me as the student. By placing emphasis on a learning/teaching dynamic rather than a question/answer dynamic, the approach aimed for knowledge-building rather than knowledge-transaction. In multilingual situations (see below), I also incorporated this approach with language-learning (Roberts et al., 2001). As it was not possible to establishing a sustained, coproduced project with the groups, we agreed that I could (audio) record our work together. Recording the voices of the group

¹⁰ I quickly found myself wondering whether I needed to decolonise my decolonising approach (!), since walking away from Group 1 on the account of an approach for which I had not accounted would only privilege my own methods and mean the voices of its members would be occluded.

members meant that their points could be expressed in their own words in the (written) ethnography, whilst their arguments could inform and frame discussion.

- **Language and voice, language as voice**

The language in which interactions with groups and individuals took place was also instrumental in the expression of their voices. As both the medium and meaning of ‘voice’, language shapes how an individual expresses themselves and articulates their experiences. However, Derrida argues, language is not simply the accents, texture or medium of a language-community, but the scaffolding for community structures and social systems (Derrida and Dufourmantelle, 2000, p. 15). In the context of this research, the language dynamics of the field therefore were implicated in the production of ‘voice’:¹¹ in the dynamic of the language-community in which it was situated: in the cultures, idioms and belongings of Somali, Kibajuni or English. The language dynamics amongst the groups with which I worked varied. Everyone with whom I spoke was multilingual, although the first or preferred languages of the speakers changed from group to group. Those of majority Somali ethnicity almost unanimously spoke Somali and English, alongside (at least) Arabic and/or other European languages; however, language-practice varied. Although speakers do not all fit into neatly defined generational practices, in general, Somali was the preferred language amongst (some) of the older generations, whilst for some of the younger generations, English was preferred. The Bajuni group did not speak Somali, but used Kibajuni, Swahili and English to differing degrees. I, on the other hand, had English as a first language, and some rather deteriorated German. Though English was therefore the point in common with many with whom I spoke, it did not mean it was always the appropriate language.

¹¹ I discuss the implication of power and privilege in language-use later in this section.

Language dynamics across the fieldwork were therefore fluid and changeable. At times I found myself in environments where English was the dominant and preferred language; in others, Somali, Arabic or Kibajuni were dominant. In all cases, I tried not to impose my language preferences upon participants and was instead led by the dynamic with which they felt most comfortable. In some rare situations, when conversations were conducted predominantly in Somali, Kibajuni or Arabic, I was unable to understand the content of people's conversations; however, in these cases, I was not excluded from the group and we managed with signs and gestures. Other situations, such as meetings with Group 1, were a little more planned and allowed for me to make language arrangements on the groups' requests. Both the men's and women's groups requested a Somali-language interpreter, which was put in place with the help of the community organisation. Though many of the group members had some English, the use of an interpreter in these situations gave precedence to Somali-language, fluency and familiarity of expression.

The use of an interpreter also raised additional questions about language-use, 'voice' and ethics. Community interpreting situations are often complex and have a less 'controlled' format than other interpreting contexts (Hale, 2007, Angelelli, 2000). They can require the interpreter to negotiate multiple social dimensions as well as language dynamics (Angelelli, 2000, Leck, 2014, Bujra, 2006) and in a formal setting can place the interpreter in a sometimes vulnerable role between a non-language speaker and a language-speaker (Leck, 2014, GRAMNet, 2014). In a research setting, consideration therefore also needs to be given to the position of the interpreter, in terms not only of their relationship with the researcher and group (Leck, 2014), but also in terms of the duration of their task, communication format, and the expectations of what is to be interpreted and how (Angelelli, 2000). In a research context too, an interpreted situation

presents different communicative dynamics to one which is not. Communicative 'flow' is structured by the rhythm of interpretation (Bujra, 2006), and as a result, linguistic and non-linguistic elements might be 'lost in translation' (Angelelli, 2000). Drawing on her own fieldwork with Somali men in Sheffield, Muna Abdi (herself a speaker of both Somali and English) notes the particular difficulty of interpreting Somali language into English due to its proverbs and unique forms of expression (Abdi, 2014, p. 3) - an observation also made to me by the interpreters with whom I worked. When working with interpreters, I therefore tried to account for three elements of potential communicative dynamics: (1) the impact of an interpreting context on communication (flow, dynamics, and relationships), (2) the role and position of the interpreter in the particular context, and (3) potential communicative gaps, as well as the effect of (re)mediation. In the two group settings in which we used interpreters, we (me, the group and the interpreter) discussed these dynamics and established the communicative conditions in which participants would be comfortable. By establishing this dynamic, I hoped to address some of the potential structural and communicative inequalities presented by a multilingual environment in which the dominance of English language nevertheless persisted.

In ethnographic work, all elements of fieldwork undergo mediation as they become part of the ethnography (Marcus and Fischer, 1999); however, an interpreted setting contributes additional and complex levels of mediation and remediation. I discuss the implications of this additional mediation on the written ethnography in Part 2.4.

2.3.4 Research practice and me: working with Somali people in Glasgow

The research practices above tried to account for the plural environments of 'the field', so that I could respond to sometimes very different situations with ethical consistency, as I discuss below.

- **Gender, faith, whiteness**

Interpretations of gendered norms varied across Somali groups and individuals, although there was a broad consensus that within 'the community' a combination of cultural and faith-based practices encouraged a more conservative interpretation of gender (see Part 4.2). This had some impact on who I was able to speak with and how I could speak with them - for instance, early on, a (male) community leader observed that some men might not wish to speak with me on my own; in other instances, I was aware of male-led community activities at which my presence would be out of place. However, I do not wish to overstate this dynamic, as I was largely put in touch with men and men's groups without hesitation. Yet whilst this meant that the research could include a greater breadth of voices, I would highlight that my access was a potential privilege of my whiteness rather than my gender. An example: early in the fieldwork, I meet a (male) community representative. At the end of my meeting, he comments to me, 'you see, we are learning in Scotland. Now, I can look a lady, someone like you, in the eye when we talk'. I drive home thinking about whether a Somali woman of my age - and especially an unmarried woman, like me - would have had access to an equivalent meeting on the same (unchaperoned) terms. I think of Fanon (Fanon, 2008) and the privileges whiteness once again has brought to the research and - in this instance - what elisions it might bring for Somali women in Glasgow. I feel uncomfortable that my

racialised gender has become 'visible' to me, but note the privileges that mean I was able to ignore it.

In other circumstances, gendered norms allowed me access to women's groups, events and homes. Somali community dynamics split responsibility for newcomers and guests in terms of gender; as a result, in community environments, I was the responsibility of the women. In addition, because I am a woman, I was permitted access to events and activities run by women and closed to men. At one stage of the research, I was invited to wedding celebrations in Glasgow.¹² At the celebration event (the *aroos*), I spent the evening getting to know the women on my table and being taught to 'dance Somali'. Though my dancing may have caused much mirth, it strengthened my links with some women in the group. At a later event, I encountered one woman - Saafia - for the third time in a week, who, laughing at my ubiquity and remembering my dancing, invited me both to eat at her flat, and to attend the *shaash saar* with her later in the week. On the night of the *shaash saar*, Saafia entertained me and her friend from Sudan, Marwa, at her flat. She fed us very generously on freshly-made *sambusa*¹³ and then dressed us each in a *dirac* (a long, loose-fitting, slightly transparent dress), a *gorgoro* (an underskirt) and a light *shaash* (scarf) (See Akou, 2004, p. 57 for Somali dress styles). We sat together at the *shaash saar* and later I once again made an attempt at dancing. Later still in the year, when I met young women from a different organisation, I found Saafia's kindness extended further than the evening of the *shaash saar*. 'Oh I know you!', sixteen year-old Idil laughs at me. 'You dress Somali!'. The atmosphere relaxes immediately.

¹² Somali weddings occur in different stages - the ceremony (*nikah*), the wedding celebrations (*aroos*) and the *shaash saar*, a women-only 'scarving' celebration which occurs with the bride (around) seven days after the wedding.

¹³ A Somali samosa, made with chicken, spring onions, chillies, spices and deep fried.

I cannot overstate the generous welcome I received from Saafia, her friends and associates. I am also aware that even as I benefit from their generosity, that my part in this research project has the potential to enact further inequalities upon them. My inclusion in male-orientated social systems should not obscure the women's continued exclusion from them; rather it should be seen as an instance of (gendered) white privilege. At the same time, my inclusion in female-orientated systems should not obscure the potential for representational violence that white womanhood has for Muslim women of colour. Though I have endeavoured throughout this thesis to make visible the mechanisms of my privilege, this does not mean that I do not continue to benefit from it. Meanwhile, the complex intersections of race, gender and social privilege occupied by Somali women in Glasgow mean that they particularly remain at risk of misrepresentation (see Part 4.2 for further discussion).

- **Clan and community connections**

As I discussed in Part 1, and as will be discussed in more depth in Part 4, Somali social structures have traditionally been stratified in terms of particular social categories, such as clan, generation or gender. Other ethnographies with Somali people in Europe have encouraged a consideration of the impact of potential stratifications on both groups and individuals, and for outsiders (see Part 4.1 for further discussion) (Zetter et al., 2005, p. 178, Bjork, 2007). Clan structures are diffuse and complex and relationships between clans are subject to political change. Furthermore, in her analysis of the Lewis school of Somali Studies,¹⁴ Kapteijns argues that scholarship has unduly centred clan as the point of analysis of Somali behaviour so that it has become a 'technology' with which institutions 'divide and conquer' Somali people (Kapteijns, 2004, p. 8, Kusow, 2004,

¹⁴ Discussed in Part 1

Ahmed, 1995b). Taking this scholarship into account, and with an inexperienced understanding of clan or its dynamics in Glasgow, I endeavoured to be aware of its potential effects in the field, whilst trying not to place inappropriate emphasis on its influence.

Some participants with whom I worked throughout the fieldwork saw my status as a white outsider as an advantage to the research, as it placed me outside the politics of clan. Others were concerned to emphasise the importance of working with more than one community group, as some organisations were seen to be partisan and representative only of particular social categories - for instance, gender, age or clan. I was advised on a number of occasions not to take the views expressed by members of such groups as neutral or representative of 'all' Somalis in Glasgow. The latter issue - clan - was of concern to many people, who suggested that members of organisations linked with a particular clan could try and use my research to further the interests of their clan at the expense of others in Glasgow. I saw no overt evidence of this throughout my fieldwork, but as it was a concern frequently raised to me, I tried to take the potential influence of clan into account when thinking about who to talk to and how to talk to them.

- **Language strategies in a complex field**

The question of language-use throughout the research not only raised the matters of communicative practicality; it also raised the question of how language is implicated in the (re)production of hierarchies of knowledge, privilege and power. The *Cadaan Studies* movement associates language with mechanisms of colonial violence (Aidid, 2015b, Aidid, 2015c). In the meantime, researchers who have worked with refugees have highlighted how the violence of the border can be closely associated with the

bureaucratic violences of a dominant language (Blommaert, 2001, Griffiths, 2012, Gibb and Good, 2014). In the context of the UK, the question of English-language ability has often been used to ‘mark’ the borders of citizenship, and populations who are seen to have insufficient English-language ability face accusations of being insufficiently ‘integrated’ (Mason and Sherwood, 2016). The use of English-language in research is therefore not a ‘neutral’ choice: it is implicated in systems of domination and power, it is the vehicle of institutional and bureaucratic violences (Graeber, 2015), it is complicit in the production of a languaged ‘hierarchy of knowledge’ (O'Rourke et al., 2015), and it is the benefactor of a hierarchy of *language* that obscures the use of other languages – and especially the use of non-European languages – in the public sphere (Nic Craith, 2003, Nic Craith, 2005).

As I discuss above, English is my first language. It is the dominant language of my research practice, and the language in which this thesis is written. It is also implicated in the colonial domination of Somali populations and in the contemporary, UK-based practices of border maintenance. An unreflexive use of English throughout this thesis therefore has the potential to reproduce these structural conditions. It also could reproduce and reinforce a hierarchy of language by obscuring the other languages in which people expressed themselves. An entirely monolingual, English-orientated thesis would also obscure the multilingual environments which Somali people inhabit in Glasgow. The question of language-use therefore returns me once again to questions of power, privilege and representation, and asks how I might respond.

Ethnographic and decolonising practices emphasise the importance of language-use in the field (Bujra, 2006). Roberts et al. argue that language familiarity can work towards addressing some of the inequalities of the research dynamic and promote an understanding of the perspectives of those with whom a researcher works (Roberts et

al., 2001). As I discuss above, the language profile of those with whom I worked was diverse. English was the first language of some of those with whom I worked; however, this was not the case for everyone: for others, Somali or Kibajuni were first languages. Throughout my fieldwork, I endeavoured to learn a little of both languages. As both languages – and especially Kibajuni – are ‘minority’ languages in Scotland, I struggled to find teachers and language-learning occurred on an ad hoc and informal basis as I worked with people in the field. Though I was not able to find further resources for Kibajuni, I found some Somali-language beginners courses online and also studied these. Though this meant I was able to do little more than greet people, it gave me a little insight into Somali-language pronunciation, grammar and logic that at least allowed me to talk *about* Somali-language if not *in* Somali-language. I also started reading Somali poetry and Somali literature (some of which was translated from Somali (Andrzejewski and Andrzejewski, 1993, Cawl, 1982), and some of which was written in English (Farah, 1999b, Farah, 1999a, Shire, 2011, Mohamed, 2010, Omaar, 2007)), which helped me learn a little about the cultures of argumentation, storytelling and aphorisms. In the meantime, I tried to incorporate language-learning more generally into my research practice. I found that asking people to teach me language, phrases or aphorisms at the least would relax relationships, as people would take much amusement in trying to teach me the rudest aphorisms they could think of! These situations certainly helped to dispel associations of research with ‘status’. They also worked towards a dynamic which inverted an entrenched ‘researcher/researched’ relationship by emphasising my role as ‘guest’ to participants’ linguistic ‘hosts’ (Phipps, 2012). In Part 2.4, I discuss how I have continued a reflexive approach to language dynamics in the written ethnography.

2.3.5 Concluding fieldwork?

Fieldwork was complex, challenging but hugely enjoyable. As the above account shows, it was often plural and 'messy' (Law, 2004), and sometimes took shape in ways that I had not anticipated. I have tried to make visible the conditions in which various situations, research decisions and research practices occurred above.

The relationship between fieldwork, analysis and 'writing up' did not occur linearly; rather each process informed the others. I completed the majority of the practice-based research by the end of 2015; however, in the light of the rather turbulent political climate of 2016, I returned several times to contacts and friends to gain their perspectives on the changing context. As a result of the complexity of the research, by the end of the fieldwork, I ended up with a vast range of information, interviews, opinions, projects, documents, fieldnotes and observations in multiple media and three languages. Though I had worked to facilitate coproducing activities with the different groups with whom I had worked, the prospect of completing a thesis largely put the emphasis on me to put these sometimes disparate outcomes and experiences together. Whilst I had tried in the fieldwork to put decolonising practices into place, I was aware that the process of writing an ethnography - of narrativisation – held the potentials and pitfalls of representational power. To make clear the approach with which I made decisions about 'voice' and representation, I discuss the writing process in Part 2.4 below.

2.4 The textual ethnography

My primary concern in structuring and establishing the representational practices of this thesis was that it would be led by the experiences of the Somali people with whom I had worked. However, this in itself presented a challenge: given the different groups with whom I had worked, their different social backgrounds and concerns and their different experiences in Glasgow city, the narrative directions in which these experiences pulled often led in diffuse directions. The question arose: how to create a piece of work that represented the disparate-yet-connected experiences of Somali people in Glasgow without imposing a top-down narrative that would obscure the voices of those involved? The very point of Somali communicative and social experiences was that they were complex, plural and multiply situated. Too much synthesis of these positions would be misrepresentative on several levels: it would smooth-out the very contradictions and disagreements that contribute to life in Glasgow, perpetuate misrepresentations of Somali experiences as monolithic, and end up saying very little at all. At the same time, by representing the plural experiences of sometimes very disparate groups, the thesis might create an impression of a 'Somali experience' that few of those with whom I worked recognised or agreed with.

In writing the thesis, I have therefore attempted to develop what Narayan calls 'collaborative ventures' (Narayan, 2012, p. 69) between Somali experiences and voices, my own reflexive, ethnographic voice, and the narratives and arguments of the scholars and theorists on which I draw. By doing this, I hope to create a sense of dialogue that foregrounds Somali voices, highlights the complexity of their experiences, and gives space for them to speak both in association with each other and in the broader academic, institutional and social narratives in which they are contextualised. To try and address

the potential hierarchy of knowledge-production within the thesis, where I have focussed on theory or ‘Somali Studies’ scholarship, I have also sought to provide Somali voices that speak to the argument made. In addition, to be mindful of my own academic activities in the hierarchical (re)production of knowledge, I have developed overt strategies of sourcing and citation (discussed below). Meanwhile, alongside a focus on dialogic, discursive and narrative ‘voice’, I have tried in this thesis to challenge some of the conventions of the textual representation of people’s communicative activities. This has some impact on the use, presentation and formatting of people’s voices in the ethnography, the details of which I also explain below.

2.4.1 Analysing and representing Somali voices

Analysis of the observations, fieldnotes, audio files, transcriptions, documents, articles, flyers, business cards, memos and project work occurred throughout the fieldwork, as I discuss in Part 2.3. However, to marshal them into the dialogic narrative of this thesis, I used some more focussed analysis practices. My priority remained the experiences and observations of the Somali people with whom I worked. As I reviewed the collection of voices, notes, audio and documents, I lightly ‘coded’ emerging themes and comments (Lichterman, 2002, pp. 129-133, Glaser and Strauss, 1967), but tried to avoid some of the rigidity of coding, which tends to foreground itself rather than its content. With some broad themes arising – the complexity of clan, gender and generation, the influence of the Glaswegian environment, the ubiquitous experience of racism and social inequality, a perpetual experience of under-recognition – I refocussed my analysis to gauge the extent to which the experiences of disparate groups might ‘talk’ to each other when framed in these thematic terms. I found spider diagrams (Osborn, 2013), and textual and visual sketching useful at this stage, as the flexibility of their form

resisted linear narratives and encouraged associations, whilst the spatial and creative element of freeform drawing and writing broke the prosaic norm. I hope, as a result, the ethnography remains both led and informed by Somali experiences in Glasgow.

Inevitably, I have been unable to include all experiences and opinions that were shared with me. When choosing which voices to include (and which not to include), I have made decisions on two criteria: (a) those which most clearly express what many others have also said, and (b) those which express experiences outwith the norm and might not be found elsewhere. In doing so, I note that I could be charged with making the comments I include ‘representative’ of a certain group or issue and I acknowledge that this might be problematic.¹⁵ At the same time, I hope that I have included sufficient context, background and nuance in the presentation of people’s voices that their individualism is clear. Meanwhile, aware that I have worked with groups of different genders, generations, lineages, socioeconomic backgrounds, educational backgrounds and with different linguistic and cultural competences, I have tried when addressing the themes in this chapter to present input from all groups. Of course, some chapters may include a greater concentration of voices from a certain group than others, but I have endeavoured to ensure that the thesis includes a balanced representation of all those with whom I spoke.

The people with whom I worked spoke to me under conditions of anonymity and I preserve these conditions throughout the thesis. I have taken care to obscure the names and identities of all those involved, and though I have not changed participants’ genders or general age categories, all other details have been anonymised. There were some instances where, due to the nature and circumstances of the work, it was not

¹⁵ Because by making a comment ‘representative’ of a certain group, it could be argued I am suggesting they ‘speak for’ those within that social category, and that all experiences in this social category are the same – a dynamic I am seeking to avoid.

possible to adequately protect the identities of those involved; as a result of these circumstances, I have not included these interactions in the thesis.

- **Representing voices**

Whilst taking care over the inclusion, representation and anonymisation of the voices in this thesis, I have also tried to account for the inevitable clash of medium when living, speaking, oral voices are included in a predominantly textual thesis. Throughout the fieldwork, I listened to, recorded, experienced and observed 'voices' in different media, formats and languages. As I have discussed in Part 2.1, and as is shown above, voices are treated in this thesis as situated, circumstantial, performed and communicative. They are also languaged, rhythmmed (Cavarero, 2005, p. 148, Lefebvre, 2007), have different tones, registers and frames of reference. How then to present them within the textualised form of the thesis? Often in sociological, ethnographic and anthropological work, the 'voices' of participants are presented as block quotations within the prosaic flow of the thesis (Back, 2007, p. 7). Back argues that presented without 'contextual nuance', such presentation often inadequately expresses the voices of their speakers. 'In the end', Back comments, 'the texture of the very lives we seek to render is flattened and glossed' (Back, 2007, p. 7). In the meantime, as Narayan observes, the formal expectations of written text often leads the research to remove 'voiced' elements of everyday interactions, so that hesitations, accents, accentuations are 'edited out' (Narayan, 2012, p. 75). Without care, Cavarero argues, unexamined textual transcription of the voice can lead to its 'erasure'. In these circumstances, and 'entrusted into the written sign, the vocalic - and therefore the meaning - disappears' (Cavarero, 2005, p. 150). How then to render the voices in this thesis contextual, living and meaningful? Cavarero calls for 'intentionally noisy' texts (Cavarero, 2005, p. 151).

The voices I present in this thesis have plural provenances and I try to deal with them as such. For voices that do not come directly from an audio recording (from notes, observation or writing), I have largely written them into prose, bearing in mind Back's above comments about contextualisation. For the voices that have a recorded aural provenance, I have done something slightly different. Narayan encourages the writer to look to fictional and creative precedent to present voices. She variously suggests presenting voices as play scripts, or considering the visuals of text on the page (Narayan, 2012, pp. 75-76). She suggests experimentation with formatting, typeset, placement and the space of the page to show emphasis and style, energy and pace (Narayan, 2012, p. 79). Drawing on the dynamic poetry of Edward Kamu Braithwaite, Cavarero suggests something similar.¹⁶ She argues that the conscious design of text on a page begins to restore the 'vocalic meaning' that is lost in a straightforward transcription (Cavarero, 2005, p. 150).

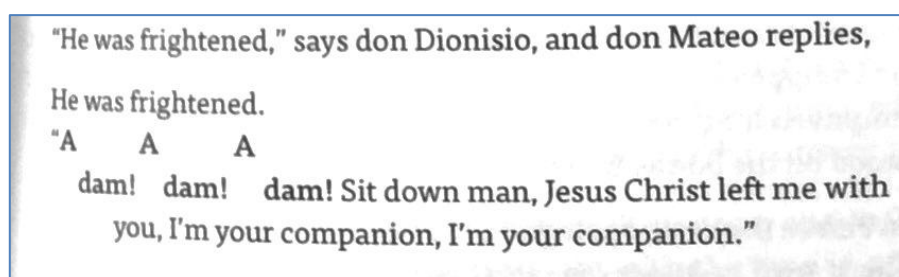


Figure 2.2: Narayan provides an example of textual graphics from Tedlock's *Breath on a Mirror*

In the instances for which aural recordings capture the moment, context, register and environment of people's voices, I have endeavoured to take a textually experimental

¹⁶ In a Somali context, the poetry of Somali-British writer Warsan Shire lightly plays with text, page and meaning to reflect Somali-British voices (Shire 2011).

approach in their presentation. In their formatting and visual presentation on the page, I try to reflect the vocal emphases, character or rhythms of a voice in its aural form. The different font in which vocal comments are presented is intended to act as a visual cue of their oral provenance.

- **Mediating multilingual interactions**

In contexts where there were plural languages - and especially in contexts where there had been language interpretation - this visual presentation of oral comments presented a challenge.

The interpreted group work and conversations had undergone several layers of mediation. I completed an initial transcription of the English parts of the audio; I then worked closely with a translator, who translated and transcribed the Somali elements of the conversations. After this was completed, we had meetings in which he also kindly agreed to 'walk me through' the translations. As a result, I eventually ended up with transcriptions with mediations and remediations of both Somali and English on several levels (see table below), including:

- Somali spoken by participants, interpreted on site into English; Somali spoken by participants, translated and transcribed from audio
- English spoken by me, interpreted into Somali; Somali interpretation transcribed and translated from audio
- English interpreted to me from Somali by interpreter, transcribed from audio
- English spoken by me, transcribed from audio

<i>Language used/user*</i>	<i>In conversation</i>	<i>Post conversation transcription</i>
Somali (participants)	Interpreted into English by interpreter	Somali: translated & transcribed English: transcribed
English (me & interpreter)	Interpreted into Somali by interpreter	Somali interpretation: translated and transcribed English: transcribed

*From my work with the Bajuni campaign, I also had documents and pieces of text written in Kibajuni, and translated into English by the campaigners.

Table 2.2: Somali/English interpreting and translation relationships

Due to their multiple mediations, the multilingual contexts of some of the conversations raised further questions about their representation in the thesis. When recounting interpreted and translated conversations, should I include all levels of mediation? Should I include all languages? How might I integrate these into the formatting scheme I had developed for the presentation of oral voices in textual form? Could translated voices be considered to be oral voices?

Where a conversation had originally been conducted in a multilingual context, and where contributors had used a language other than English to express themselves, I decided to retain and include the original language alongside their translations in the thesis. This had three benefits: it meant that the comments would remain linguistically accessible for those who made them; it would include the linguistic vehicle in which that person's voice was mediated; it would actively and visibly include languages that would otherwise be obscured by the hegemony of English. In terms of the formatting system above, I have integrated multilingual interactions by presenting them as languaged dialogues. The Somali original and its English translation are presented in parallel with each other, as if they were in conversation. In the instances where the interpreted and translated English versions differ significantly in context, I have included both for context and information.

2.4.2 Working with the textual elements of the research

Following the completion of fieldwork, a substantial part of the written ethnography was taken up by transcribing, analysing and mediating both audio recordings of people's voices and my own audio fieldnotes. However, alongside these aural elements of fieldwork, there were also a number of text-based pieces that required analysis. This included: the Bajuni campaigners' blog, documents on relevant policy and legislation, and news articles about Somali people in Glasgow. I analysed these textual elements alongside the rest of my fieldwork sources and applied the same thematic and associational coding that I describe above. When it became clear that the thesis would include analyses of policy and media reactions to Somali people in Glasgow, I conducted a more detailed analysis of the relevant texts (see Parts 5.1 and 5.2). In the analyses of these two elements, I drew on deconstructive practices to focus specifically on how they 'discoursed' (Derrida, 2004, Naples, 2003) norms of belonging and exclusion in Scotland. I limited the analysis of both policy and news-media texts by applying a timeframe limited by the implementation of the Dispersal Scheme in the late 1990s. Meanwhile, the scope and focus of the analysis of these documents is informed by the experiences of Somali people in Glasgow.

2.4.3 Addressing the (re)production of academic knowledge

Though this ethnography is led by the voices and experiences of Somali participants, it is also embedded in academic discourse and the institution of the Academy. The critiques of *Cadaan Studies* and decolonising scholarship have emphasised that norms and habits of academia are implicated in the domination of 'subaltern' groups, including

the reproduction of certain forms of knowledge, power and privilege. Drawing on such scholarship, this chapter has started to unpack ways in which some of the complicities of academic research can be accounted for in method and practice; however, as the academic institution is based as much on writing as it is on practice, writing norms also need to be considered.


- 
1. Engage[1] with[2] my[3] scholarship.[4]
 2. Engage[5] with[6] scholarship[7] by other[8] Indigenous[9] scholars.[10]
 3. Yep that's pretty much it.[11]

Figure 2.3: the beginning of Te Punga Somerville's (2016) poem on indigenous scholarship and citation practices

Drawing on phenomenological critiques of space and power, Sara Ahmed analyses the Academy in terms of habits, practice and repetition (Ahmed, 2012, Ahmed, 2013a, Ahmed, 2013b) from a feminist perspective. She argues that dominant racialised, gendered, classed and other norms are embedded in the academic institution through the repetition of practices that produce and reproduce the same set of norms. Within a research setting, she argues, this reproduction of norms crystallises in citation practices: 'I would describe citation as a rather successful reproductive technology, a way of reproducing the world around certain bodies. These citational structures can form what we call disciplines' (Ahmed, 2013b). Normative citation practices, Ahmed argues, orientates academics towards the work of those in dominant positions, so that white, male and academic forms of knowledge become canonical, to the exclusion and erasure of others (Ahmed, 2013b). In this context, Ahmed's work speaks to Black Feminist and

postcolonial arguments that history is determined by those in positions of power (Carby, 1997, Spivak, [1985] 2010). It also speaks to the critiques made by the *Cadaan Studies* movement about whiteness, colonisation and academic institutionality.

Responding to Ahmed's work, Tuck et al. (2015) used the platform of the *Critical Ethnic Studies* journal to launch a year-long 'citation practice challenge', in which they encourage academics to 'be more intentional about our citation practices, to more fully consider the politics of citation. We aim to stop erasing Indigenous, Black, brown, trans, disabled POC, QT POC, feminist, activist, and disability/crip contributions from our intellectual genealogies' (Tuck et al., 2015). In the meantime, indigenous scholar Alice Te Punga Somerville (2016) uses poetic form (see *Figure 2.3* above) to encourage a greater flexibility in who and what can be considered citable in academia. She notes that as indigenous groups often face challenges of access and resources, their work might be found in places not 'traditionally' considered 'academic'. Moreover, she notes, as indigenous critique often aims for creative and experimental expression, academia should look to forms of expression beyond 'academic' models (Te Punga Somerville, 2016; footnote 3). Might the same critique be applied to other minority groups?

Drawing on the work above, and with specific reference to the *Cadaan Studies* critique, I have endeavoured to be 'intentional' about who and what I cite in this thesis. This at times has presented challenges, for such is the monopoly of some norms in theory and philosophy, avoiding their citation might lead to charges of under-research. However, where possible, I have avoided 'centering' their contribution, and have also looked for alternative scholarship amongst people and scholars of colour, women and people from minority groups. Meanwhile, in an attempt to break the white, male hegemony of the 'Somali Studies' canon (and noting my own whiteness), I have

attempted to find Somali-led work on the field. To do this, I have actively privileged scholarship by Somali scholars and writers, which has sometimes led to the use of alternative sources (blogs, podcasts) and forms (novels, oral storytelling and poetry).

2.4.4 Narrative beginnings and beyond

In the following chapters, I put the decisions and research practices discussed above into use. Led by the opinions and voices of the Somali people with whom I worked, the following chapters begin to trace the experiences of the Somali population since people began to arrive in Glasgow in the early 2000s. Though the following chapters begin to establish a narrative about Somali experiences in Scotland, they neither seek to represent the Somali identity as monolithic, nor do they seek to disguise sometimes unresolved complexities of what it might mean to ‘have voice’ as a Somali person in Glasgow. Though the following chapters take on narrative form, they do so without necessarily seeking to ‘resolve’ the complexity of experience that they portray. Rather, they try to represent the experiences, lives and ‘voices’ in the intersecting and cross-secting ways in which they occur.

Part 3: Sheeko Sheeko: Narrating Somali community in Glasgow City

In Part 3, I build on the fieldwork discussed in Part 2 to consider Somali experiences of (not) ‘having voice’ in Glasgow. ‘Sheeko sheeko’ is the first part of a call-and-answer between an orator and audience, parent and child, and is said to indicate that the speaker is ready to tell a tale. Part question, part proffer, it translates into English as ‘story story...’. The offer made, the answer comes back: ‘sheeko xariir’ - ‘tell us a story!’ And so I begin.

This section is divided into two parts. Part 3.1 gives an account of how a Somali population has developed in Scotland. Drawing on historical accounts as well as the experiences of those with whom I worked, it traces the development of a Somali population in Glasgow. Highlighting both the colonial provenances of the relationship between Somali people and Scotland and the recent effects of both Devolution and Dispersal, it discusses how Glasgow’s historical, social and cultural environment have shaped the development of a Somali community in Glasgow. Part 3.2 builds on these accounts to focus on Somali people’s experiences of ‘voice’ in Glasgow. It discusses how, amongst those with whom I spoke, ideas about ‘voice’ and community are closely associated. However, it notes, though both ‘internal’ and ‘external’ community infrastructures might be associated with ‘voice’, they do not necessary solely enable vocal activity. Rather, I suggest the relationship between Somali experiences of community and the Glasgow context is complex and requires in-depth consideration.

3.1 Beginnings

3.1.1 Axmed's story

Axmed's favourite memory of Scotland was the chance discovery, in a second-hand Edinburgh bookshop, of Faraax MJ Cawl's (1982) *Ignorance is the Enemy of Love*. The book was the first Somali novel published after Latinate Somali orthography was established in 1972 by the (then) socialist state. It tells of the tragic of Calimaax, an illiterate Dervish activist fighting the imperialism of the British, Italians and Ethiopians, and Cawrala, a lettered poet who is rescued by Calimaax when the ship in which they are travelling is caught in a storm. In Edinburgh, Axmed was delighted by his find. Though the story was in text, the novel captured the long-held character and parable of the oratory of his homeland. Like him, the book was a little piece of Somalia in Scotland. Like him too, the book had travelled far. And like him too, the novel's protagonists had survived a shipwreck.

Axmed survived the English hurricane of 1987. When the storm hit the south coast of England, he had been locked in a cabin on the *Earl William*, a vessel hastily converted from ferry to detention ship by the UK government in response to the arrival of 58 Tamil families seeking asylum from the Sri Lankan civil war (Pirouet, 2010, p. 32). Axmed, along with the Tamils and other Somalis, had been caught in the sweep to detain others who too were seeking asylum. To the increasing consternation of the Home Office, the ship quickly gained notoriety for its cramped and claustrophobic conditions, and for the hunger strikes of its detainees. When the hurricane reached the *Earl William's* berth in Harwich, it destroyed the ship's mooring and set it loose in the sea. Locked in their cabins, the prisoners could only watch as the ship pitched against the elements. By morning, and battered by the storm, the ship and its prisoners were returned to port to resume their moored imprisonment. However, sensing a public

outcry over the danger in which the unloosed prison ship had placed its inhabitants, the authorities reconsidered its political expediency. The next morning, Axmed and the other occupants of the *Earl William* were quietly set free. Without ties to a particular place in the UK, Axmed cast about for a suitable place to live. He was told that he might find welcome in Scotland, and travelled to Edinburgh to try and settle.

Whilst he was in Edinburgh, Axmed gained indefinite leave to remain. In Somalia, he had studied medicine and had put his knowledge to use, acting as an interpreter for *Medicine Sans Frontiers* in a refugee camp. He was forced to leave Somalia when a family connection to those politically involved in the civil war placed his life in jeopardy. In Edinburgh, he signed up to an access course to convert his medical knowledge into a Scottish setting. He sent good reports of his new city to his connections in London, and was soon joined by five young men - one of them his cousin - and a married couple with three children. With events in Somalia continuing to cause political fracture, the group was far from united but its members nevertheless maintained connections between themselves, and to Scotland.

But just as *Ignorance is the Enemy of Love* ends in tragedy, Axmed's story too does not end well. In January 1989, Axmed and his cousin went to a bar in Edinburgh. A group of men nearby took against their conversation, and Axmed and his cousin, not wishing for confrontation, decided to leave. As they left the bar, three of the group followed. Axmed and his cousin were attacked; both were stabbed and seriously injured, and Axmed later died. In the aftermath of his death, though three men were charged with Axmed's murder, none were convicted. In echoes of the Stephen Lawrence case, police and media attention focussed on Axmed's race, and advanced some scepticism over who was to blame for the attack (Kelly, 2000). The remaining group of Somali people were traumatised by Axmed's death. Causing further upset, the

case delayed his burial and drew unwanted and hostile public attention to their lives. Once Axmed was buried, the group swiftly left Edinburgh to settle elsewhere.

I was told Axmed's story by one of his friends, who remembers him fondly. From the 1980s onwards, Axmed's friend worked for a Scottish charity that offered support to those seeking asylum in Scotland. Axmed's arrival in Edinburgh in 1987 was the first time she had encountered a Somali person wishing to settle in Scotland. In the wake of his death, Axmed's friend wondered whether his case marked something of a watershed for any other Somali people considering a move to Scotland. Though she continued working in refugee support throughout the 1990s, she only sporadically encountered individual Somali people who had been brought to Scotland on resettlement programmes. Throughout the 1990s, she did not come across another instance of Somali people moving to Scotland with the purpose of settling permanently here. She remembers with some poignancy Axmed's discovery of the copy of *Ignorance is the Enemy of Love*, and his excitement of a tangible, material link between Scotland and Somalia. Later, I search out the novel, and am struck by its parallels to Axmed's story. Like Axmed's story, though the novel begins with a rescue and a new relationship, it ends in tragedy. Cawrala and Calimaax remain separated by war and culture. Because Calimaax is unable to read, they are unable to communicate with each other, and a series of miscommunications eventually leads to both their deaths. In the light also of Axmed's tragic death, I think on the novel's themes of communicative dissidence, cultural difference, violence and power and note how they are also thus embedded in the beginnings of a relationship between Scotland and Somali people.

3.1.2 Somali people in Scotland

Though Axmed's arrival in Scotland was the earliest arrival in the memories of the people with whom I spoke throughout my fieldwork, Axmed was not the first Somali person to settle in Scotland. Unusually for a merchant city so embedded in the project of Empire, Glasgow does not have an historic Somali population. Where other cities with comparable roles in the British Empire (such as Liverpool, Bristol or London) have Somali populations that grew from the initial settlements of the Somali ex-seamen who worked in the military and merchant navy for the British administration, there is no record of a Somali population developing in a similar way in Glasgow. However, this is not to say that Scotland was not implicated in the imperial projects of the British in Somalia. In 1911, *The Herald* reports the commissioning (*Figure 3.1*) of a 'Somali Village' (*Figure 3.2*) for the seaside resort at the Marine Gardens in Portobello, Edinburgh.

100 YEARS AGO

A CABLEGRAM was received in Edinburgh by officials of the Marine Gardens stating that the representative, entrusted with negotiations for the Somali village for the Gardens, arrived at Jiboute, Somaliland, and is now recruiting natives to appear at Portobello.

Figure 3.1: A report from The Herald on 13th April 1911 detailing 'recruitment' in Djibouti (Herald Scotland, 2011)

The 'Somali Village' was included as an attraction for the newly-developed Portobello pleasure beach (Freeman, 2015, pp. 27-9). It followed the exploitative and widespread practice of Empire of exhibiting 'human zoos' that contained people from places of conquest (Olusoga, 2016, p. 408). Olusoga notes that whilst human zoos 'were intended to be celebrations of the triumphs of the imperial project, such exhibitions were also a reaffirmation of European racial supremacy over Africans', and were given a 'veneer of

respectability' by the 'new sciences of ethnography and anthropology' (Olusoga, 2016, p. 408). The Portobello village followed the popularity of similar 'Somali villages' in resorts in England in the 1910s (Olusoga, 2016, p. 409) and brought seventy Somali men, women and children to Scotland (Freeman, 2015, p. 28). It was immediately popular, attracting people who wished 'mostly to point and laugh' at the rituals the village population were contracted to perform (Freeman, 2015, p. 29). The village was disbanded at the onset of the First World War (McLean, 2013) and there is no further record of the families involved. Today there is nothing remaining of the village, and this colonially-embedded relationship between Somali people and Scotland has been disregarded, save for some rather breezy reporting that disingenuously remembers the village as a 'curiosity' (McLean, 2013).



Figure 3.2: A postcard depicting members of the 'Somali Village' at Portobello (Freeman, 2015, p. 28)

Records of Somali people in Scotland after this point are somewhat scarce. The Equalities Council finds that after the First World War, 'expansion in African economies' saw a significant enough increase in arrivals from East Africa for the establishment of an 'East African' society at the University of Glasgow in 1958 (Equalities Opportunities Programme, 2012, p. 13). In the latter half of the twentieth century, wealthy Somali families chose to migrate to the UK for business and education opportunities (Harris, 2004) and it is possible some settled in Scotland and were part of the University society. However, I have been unable to find further records of Somali people in Scotland at this time.

By the time Axmed arrived in Edinburgh in 1989, there was no established Somali community in Scotland and he began to form one of his own. Following Axmed's death, the tentative group that had formed in Edinburgh had disintegrated. On the arrival of 'Dispersed' Somali people to Glasgow ten years later, again there was no community infrastructure. At the turn of the Millennium, the new Somali population were starting from scratch.

3.1.3 Dispersal and Glasgow: the early years

The introduction of the Dispersal Scheme in 1999 coincided with circumstances both in Somalia and in the UK, which gradually led to far larger numbers of Somalis arriving in Glasgow. By 2006, asylum applications in Glasgow from people from Iran, Pakistan, Congo and Somalia made up one-third of total asylum applications (ICAR, 2009). Figures for the asylum-seeking population information from this period are patchy and inconsistent (Gillespie, 2012, Allsopp et al., 2014). In the early 2000s, various sources had identified the beginnings of a Somali population in Scotland, which was counted at

either 350 people (Wren, 2004, p. 21) or 193 people (Glasgow City Council, 2003, p. 9) in Glasgow, or 159 Somalis in Scotland (BBC, 2005) (see *Appendix B* for details).

For those caught up in the initiation of the Dispersal in the early 2000s, the Scheme was unexpected, disorientating and isolating. The following narrative is by Amal Azzudin, who spoke at a public event in Paisley in 2015. As the event was public and her story well-known in Glasgow (see below), Amal agreed I could transcribe it here and use her name. Amal and her family come from Somalia. On arrival in the UK, they had initially stayed with family in London until a lack of space prompted them to request accommodation elsewhere. She takes up her story:

... one day they came with a massive coach and there was lots of families on this coach,

right,
and we thought, obviously it would be a city near London and everything, but we almost did a tour of the UK that day because every family was getting off in Manchester, in Liverpool,

all these cities!
but we're not getting off, and I'm thinking, you know, is my family even on this list, you know? so I went up to the man - and at that time my English was much better than my mum's - and I said,

look sir, is my family's name on this list, my name's Amal...

and he's like, yeah you're last

and I thought, *what do you mean*, we're last,

and he's like, you're going to Glasgow

and I was like, ***where's Glasgow***

and he was like, it's in Scotland

and I was like, yeah, **where is Scotland?**

And I freaked out, right, and I went back down to sit with my mum and I was like, mum, do you know where Glasgow is,
she's like, *no*,

do you know where Scotland is,

she's like, *no*,

and I'm like *oh my goodness*,

and then of course, other families had overheard this because they were getting off at Newcastle or some place, and she said, Amal, I heard you're going to Glasgow, and I said, yes, she's like, *I'm so sorry for you*

[Amal's audience bursts into laughter.

She pauses and smiles at us, before continuing]

and I'm like, *why are you feeling sorry for me?* Because, she said, well Glasgow, it's snowing all the time, you know, people are not nice, it's rough, and everything,

and I thought, *oh great, thanks very much*,

so I went and sat back down and told my mum and I just burst into tears

Although Amal now tells the story with a knowing smile ('I wish I could see that family again and tell them how wrong they are'), the initial shock of Dispersal was difficult. Conditions too in Glasgow were challenging. Contrary to recommendations made by the Refugee Council and other community practitioners (Hynes, 2011, p. 72), Dispersal housing policy often accommodated those in the Scheme in areas that were often geographically and socially isolated, had little experience of diverse populations, and experienced multiple deprivations (Allsopp et al., 2014, Hynes, 2011, Robinson et al., 2004). Accommodation was often of a poor quality, the areas difficult to reach by walking or on public transport, and appropriate amenities were far away. Newcomers were also often linguistically and socially isolated, as proposals to accommodate arrivals on the basis of 'language clustering' (Piacentini, 2012, p. 130) were dropped in favour of strategies that filled residency deficits in unpopular areas of the city (Hynes, 2011, p. 77). As Dispersal sites in Glasgow were scattered across the city (including in the Sighthill and Red Road areas, Maryhill, Drumchapel and Parkhead (see *Figure 3.3*

below)), making connections with people who shared the same language and culture was additionally difficult. In the meantime, city-based support networks, including language, social and legal services, were underprepared and under-resourced for the needs of the new populations (Piacentini, 2012).

Life in the Dispersal sites was particularly tough. Socially and economically neglected by local and national government (Kelly, 2002, Walsh et al., 2016), some long-term residents saw newcomers as 'competition' for sparsely distributed resources. Tensions were further stoked in parts of the news media, which portrayed asylum seekers and refugees as 'benefit cheats' and 'freeloaders' (Coole, 2002). In media reports, the arrival of the new populations in areas of multiple deprivations was often treated in racialised and classed terms, so that long-term residents were portrayed as (exclusively) white, and working-class and were set in opposition to new residents, who were portrayed as a racialised (black, Asian and/or Muslim) and classed (asylum-seeking) Other (Coole, 2002, Kelly, 2002, Emejulu, 2016). Somali people who arrived in Glasgow at this time remember the sites as unpleasant places to live. Cabdi, who arrived in Glasgow in his 30s, recalls,

In the first two years I was living,
high flats in Red Road
and really experience a very hard, very tough life,
broken car, my car window,
throwing away things to our children, beating children,
sometimes abuse and a lot of other things
but it's a bit different now

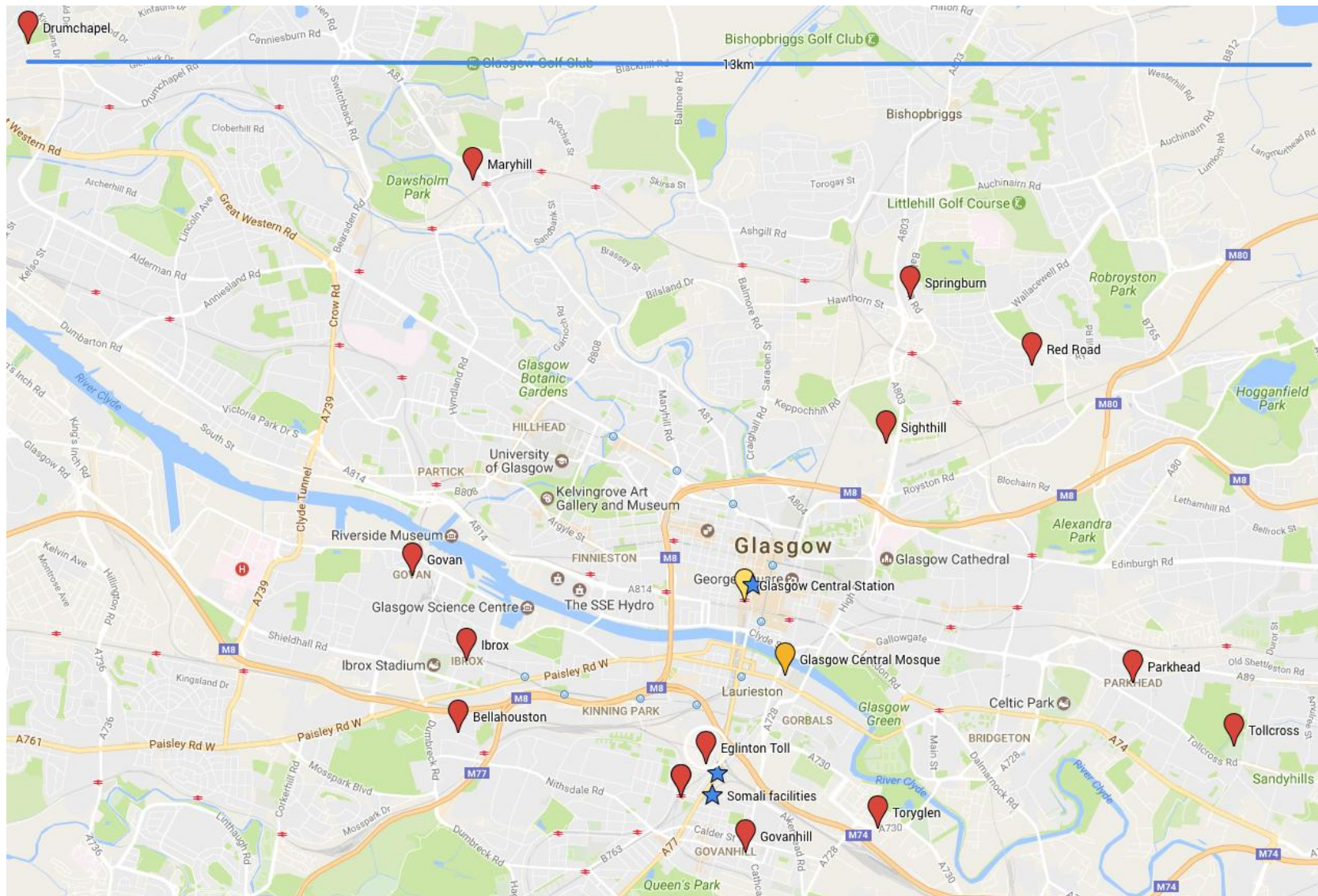


Figure 3.3: Map of Glasgow, with areas of Somali populations (Created using GoogleMyMaps)

Others also remember this period as particularly difficult. Over tea and in a conversation with a group of women, I ask,

how do you find life in Glasgow?

Saafia responds in English,

It's good, Glasgow is a good city. Except the weather.

Glasgow is a beautiful, actually

the first time when I come, it's not good as a refugee. But now they understand people

and what it means, refugee

Jamiila agrees, and addresses the group

*Waa adkeyd oo luuqadda ma eeynaan garaneyn,
luuqaddana weey nagu adkeyd, cimiladana
meynaan garaneyn.*

It was hard, we didn't speak the language.

The language was hard for us, we couldn't understand the weather

The group agrees, but Jamiila does not linger on the memory.

She turns to the interpreter and instructs her to address me,

*Laakiin u sheeg ineey fiican tahay hadda. Markii
aan kusoo guurney guryaha yar yar, waxaa nala
deggenaa junky badan oo dhibaatooyin badan
nagu hayey.*

But tell her that it is fine, when we moved to the smaller buildings.

[Before] there were many junkies that gave us problems

Another voice - Isra's - chips in with a note of concern,

But tell her now is fine and we are happy.

I ask, and am interpreted –

Is it because you lived here for a long time or because something has changed?

Saafia explains to me,

*Waan la qabsaney, magaaladana weey is bedeshey.
Dadka waxeey fahmeen in aay jiraan dad dacallada
addunka ka kale yimid, kuwo kuwaas ka mid ahna aay
Glasgow imaadeen. Markii hore ma eeynaan
fahansaneen dhaqanka dadkan. Haddase waxeey
fahmeen in ajnabiga aay isla nool yihiin. Markii hore se
ma aynan ogeen.*

We got used to it and the city has changed. People understood that there are other people from all over the world and some of these people came to Glasgow. At first, we didn't understand these people's customs. Now they understand that foreigners live with them. Before they didn't know this.

Fartuun says,

*Waan ka baqi jirney. Markii ugu horeeysey, oo aan
halkan nimid si aad ah ayeey inoo argagixin jireen.
Haddase weey ka wanaagsan tahay.*

We were scared of them.

At first, when we first came they use to terrorise us a lot.

Now it is much better.

Fartuun tells me that she would have stones thrown at her and that men in the street would try and tear off her hijab. Others describe endemic, everyday violence. As Jamiila comments above, the linguistic and cultural isolation that was exacerbated by Dispersal policies seemed connected to the wider hostile climate ('the language was hard for us / we couldn't understand the weather').

In the early 2000s, incidences of racist abuse in Dispersal sites were widespread; however, police, local and national government responses remained 'complacent' and attached to the idea that Scotland 'did not have a racism problem' (Arshad, 2003, p. 138). Somali people remember the North East area of Glasgow in the early 2000s as particularly difficult to live in. In 2001 in Sighthill, the murder of Firsat Dag, a Kurdish man seeking asylum, prompted community-led and national outcry (Piacentini, 2012, p. 123). In the most violent terms, the case brought to public attention the long neglect by local authorities and national government, both of asylum seekers and refugees, and of 'Glaswegians living in poverty', alongside the 'fact' of racism in Scotland (Kelly, 2002, p. 21). The case elicited promises across the board to address the neglect of the Sighthill communities. At national level, policy makers reassessed Scotland's approaches to everyday and institutional racism (Arshad, 2003), and a series of campaigns and community development initiatives were put in place (Rosenberg, 2008, Wren, 2004).

Over the following years – as Cabdi, Jamiila and Saafia observe above – life in Glasgow has improved. However, this is not to say Somali people no longer experience institutional and everyday racism, and though there are continuing attempts to improve on these issues, it is certainly not the case that they have been fully resolved, as Saafia's comment tellingly suggests - 'now they understand that foreigners live with them'.

3.1.4 Forming community in post-Dispersal conditions

Despite the challenging climate of the early Dispersal years, Somali people in Glasgow persevered. Without an established Somali community infrastructure, people found different and creative ways of connecting with people both from within and outside of the Somali population in the city. In the early 2000s, a Somali women's group formed

on the basis of a shared interest in raising awareness of the practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in Scotland. Using links with Glasgow-based NGOs and the Scottish Executive, they informed the content of the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation (Scotland) Bill (Scottish Executive, 2004, p. 2). Due to the sensitive elements of their work, the group did not make their organisation public; however, the women involved have continued to do related community work on an informal basis.

In more public settings, connections were forged through other means. Some in the Somali population drew on UK-wide Somali networks to establish through family and kinship connections knowledge of other Somali people who had been brought to Glasgow. Attempts were made to establish a more formal community organisation; however, over the last ten years, it has experienced funding and leadership difficulties. More recently, attempts have been made to form additional community groups, including an organisation that focuses on supporting young Somali people in Glasgow. Outside 'formal' community organisations, people made connections in other ways. Faraax, who moved to Glasgow in the mid-2000s with his mother and siblings, remembers that once his mother had gained leave to remain, she sought employment as a Somali interpreter. She used the mobility of her new job both to find and establish links with other Somali people in Glasgow, but also to get to know the city. Others sought to establish community with those who lived in their neighbourhoods. Muna, who arrived in Glasgow nine years ago, recalls that because of the way that the Scheme mixed and scattered people across Glasgow, there were not many other Somali children at her school. This meant she was initially linguistically and culturally isolated; however, she found that the mix in her class meant that she made friends with people from all over the world, many of whom were also experiencing life in the Scheme.

Amal's now famous Glasgow Girls campaign is a well-known instance of this early dynamic (Hill and Nic Craith, 2016). Amal was a pupil at Drumchapel High when in 2005, the Home Office detained her friend and fellow school-pupil, Agnesa, and her family. With the help of friends from places including Scotland, Iraq and Poland, Amal coordinated a campaign for Agnesa's release, and brought the issues of dawn raids and child detention to unprecedented public attention. The campaign marked a point of contrast to the racial tensions and complacent context of Firsat Dag's murder, and although it was not without opposition, was well-received in public and political contexts. The story of the campaign has since been told in multiple forms - in a 2005/6 BBC documentary (Hill, 2005, Hill, 2006), a musical (Bisset and Greig, 2006) and a TV musical-drama (Barr, 2014).

3.1.5 Somali people in contemporary Glasgow

Today there is an established Somali population in Glasgow. Population data about Somali people in Glasgow is inconsistent and incomplete (see *Appendix B* for details); however, it sketches an impression of the population's size and growth. Census data suggests that between 2001 and 2011, the Somali population in Scotland increased from 159 to 1,591 people (Scottish Government, 2014b) – an increase of 900.6%. In the meantime, the Office of National Statistics estimates a population that is potentially as large as 4,000 people (ONS, 2013). The School Pupil Census (Scotland) places the large majority (98%) of Somali-speaking pupils in Glasgow (Scottish Government, 2015b); meanwhile, there is some evidence of a settled Somali community in the city in the Somali-owned and orientated facilities that have been established in Glasgow's Southside, including a cafe and social space and a *dahabshiil* (a Somali currency transfer system). However, despite the focus of facilities in the Southside, Somali

people live in areas all over Glasgow. The School Pupil Census (Scottish Government, 2015b) locates the largest number of Somali-speaking pupils in Glasgow North East (121 pupils; 65.1% of the pupil population), followed by Glasgow South (87 pupils; 32%) and then by Glasgow North West (60 pupils; 22.4%). Throughout my fieldwork, I encountered people in areas including: Eglintontoll, Toryglen (South-East), Drumchapel (North West), Springburn, Royston and St Rollox (North East), Parkhead, Tollcross and Shettleston (East) (see *Figure 3.3* above).

The population data above suggests that, nearly two decades from the point at which the Somali population began arriving in Glasgow in significant numbers, and despite considerable challenges, Somali people have begun to establish themselves in the city. With as many as 4,000 people of Somali heritage living in Glasgow, today it can certainly be considered as one of the largest African populations both in the city and in Scotland (see *Appendix B*). As a post-migration population (Modood and Meer, 2012), the community has coped with the challenges of initial settlement, network-building, cultural, social and linguistic isolation, population retention and challenges to citizenship. Many of these challenges continue to be factors in the population's lives in the city, as I will discuss throughout this thesis. However, fifteen years settled, it now also is presented with additional challenges of community building and community maintenance. In a multicultural Glaswegian setting, it faces the same questions as many other 'post-migration' populations: how to negotiate community and cultural boundaries and conflicting gendered and generational approaches; how to interact with other communities in the city; how to respond to the often imposed requirements of 'integration'; how to respond to structural discriminations.

However, at the same time as the Glasgow-based Somali population faces these broad challenges of living in a multicultural urban setting, it is also faces specific

environments and experiences. Due to the conditions of the Somali population's arrival, the population lives with the consequences of Dispersal policy, the impact of which upon community formation are briefly discussed above (see also Part 3.2 and Part 4). Alongside these social impacts, Dispersal also has long-term socioeconomic consequences. Scholarship suggests that the economic effects of the asylum and refugee process are adverse and enduring (Mulvey, 2009, Lindsay et al., 2010, p. 5, Allsopp et al., 2014). In post-Dispersal contexts, Phillimore finds a causal link between refugee backgrounds, socioeconomic hardship, housing within areas of multiple deprivations and high unemployment rates (Phillimore and Goodson, 2006). In Glasgow, many of the locations in which Somali people live are listed within the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland (please see *Figure 3.4* below for supporting information), and others within the 50% most deprived areas. Whilst residency in these areas alone is by no means indicative of a person's means or experiences, it might be used to sketch an impression of Somali people's socioeconomic prospects in Glasgow over the last two decades. Alongside this, work by Emejulu and Bassel (Emejulu and Bassel, 2015) and Netto et al (Netto et al., 2011) indicates that institutional and structural racism contribute to the under- and unemployment of people of colour in Scotland. In research with some of Glasgow's Somali population, Sosenko et al find that socioeconomic conditions had consequences for every aspect of their lives:

'Very worryingly, our study highlights the fact that experience of economic difficulties is not limited to worsening quality of life in material and educational terms. Participants felt that in the worst cases, financial problems could contribute to the dissolution of family relationship and in increased racial tensions between communities and individuals in neighbourhoods and in broader Scottish society'

(Sosenko et al., 2013, p. 35)

Figure 3.4: Dispersal, Areas of Multiple Deprivations and Somali Populations in Glasgow

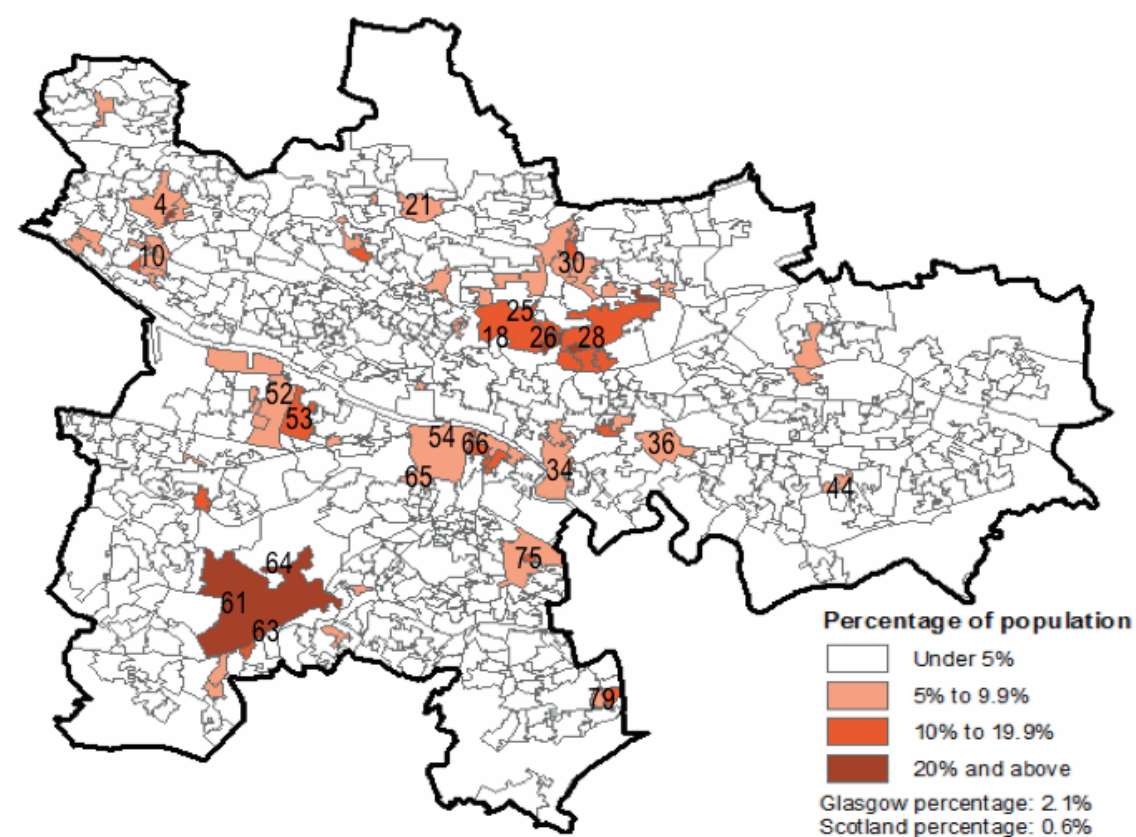


Figure 3.4a (left):
African Populations in
Glasgow Mapped

Figure adapted from
map (CoDE, 2014)

Please see key and
supporting information
below

*Table 3.1: Dispersal, Areas of Multiple Deprivations and Somali Populations in Glasgow :
Glasgow Wards by Dispersal Site, SIMD and Somali Population*

	Ward name	Ward area	Dispersal site?	SIMD index*	% African population**	Somali population?***
4	Knightswood	Scotstoun / Drumchapel	Primary dispersal	20-50% most deprived	5-9.9%	60 Somali speaking pupils
10	Scotstoun			10-20% most deprived	10-19.9%	
18	Woodlands	Hillhead		50% least deprived	10-19.9%	
21	Maryhill	Maryhill	Primary dispersal	20-50% most deprived	5-9.9%	
25	Firhill	Canal		10% most deprived	10-19.9%	
26	Keppochill			50% least deprived	10-19.9%	
28	Royston	Springburn	Primary dispersal	20-50% most deprived	10-19.9%	121 Somali speaking pupils
30	Springburn		Primary dispersal	10-20% most deprived	10-19.9%	
34	Calton	Calton		20-50% most deprived	5-9.9%	
36	Parkhead		Secondary dispersal	10% most deprived	5-9.9%	
44	Tollcross	Shettleston	Secondary dispersal	10% most deprived	5-9.9%	
52	Govan	Govan	Primary dispersal	10% most deprived	5-9.9%	87 Somali speaking pupils
53	Ibrox		Primary dispersal	20-50% most deprived	10-19.9%	
54	Kingston			50% least deprived	5-9.9%	
66	Hutchesontown			50% least deprived	5-9.9%	
65	Pollockshields East	Pollockshields		10-20% most deprived	10-19.9%	
75	Toryglen	Linn	Secondary dispersal	10% most deprived	10-19.9%	
61	Nitshill	Newlands		50% least deprived	20% +	
63	Carnwadric			50% least deprived	20% +	
64	Maxwell Park			50% least deprived	20% +	

* data from SIMD (Scottish Government, 2016b)**data from CoDE (2014); ***according to data taken from 2015 Glasgow School Census (Scottish Government, 2015b)

3.1.6 Beyond Dispersal?

Somali people have now sustained a population in Glasgow for over fifteen years. They have done so within the conditions created by both the means of their arrival (Dispersal) and the environment of Glasgow City. As the accounts and scholarship above suggest, these environmental, structural and social factors have all had an impact on how, and the extent to which, Somali people have ‘settled’, formed ‘communities’ and established their lives in Glasgow. The story of Axmed’s murder and the history of the ‘Somali Village’ in twentieth-century Edinburgh frame the relationship between Scotland and Somali people in a history of colonialism and violence. The above recollections of those who first arrived under the Dispersal Scheme suggest an initial continuation of these themes in twenty-first century Glasgow. They also begin to speak of improved conditions and relationships in the city – however, they also highlight that many issues have not been resolved.

The diffuse, longer-term effects of Dispersal remain under-researched and under-articulated; however, Somali experiences in Glasgow suggest that they persist. As research by Netto et al (2011), Emejuli and Bassel (2015), and Sosenko et al (2013) suggests, the structural effects both of Dispersal and of racism mean that Somali people experience social and economic disadvantages that have curtailed opportunities for individual and community development. In addition, and as a further consequence of Dispersal, Somali people have experienced these conditions without the support of an existing Somali community infrastructure. As I will discuss in later chapters (see Part 4), the cultural and geographic isolation of the Glasgow environment has not only meant that Somali people have had to build links, lives and ‘communities’ in Glasgow from scratch, but that they have had to do so in ways that are responsive to the Glasgow environment. At the same time, though the Somali population in Glasgow is unique in

the sense of its arrival, history and subsequent demographic make-up, it nevertheless faces similar issues to other Somali communities in the UK and Europe. Alongside external structural, social and environmental conditions, Somali people have also had to navigate changes to Somali cultural and social norms, including clan, generational hierarchy, gendered systems and linguistic practices.

This first chapter has sought to establish some narrative beginnings to Somali experiences in Glasgow. In the context of the complex social, cultural and structural environment experienced by Somali people in the city, it looks to the remainder of the thesis to ask and discuss, in this context, and in negotiation with the challenges, barriers and opportunities arising therein, to what extent do Somali people ‘have voice’ in Glasgow? And how might they do this?

3.2 Somali community and 'voice' in multicultural Glasgow

At the time we met, Duniya was seventeen years old and had lived in Glasgow for nearly a decade. She was in her first year of university, and in her spare time had a part-time job as a Somali-language interpreter. She had agreed to come to a meeting I had arranged with a group of young adults to talk about their experiences of 'being Somali' in Glasgow. The group had mixed experiences - whilst some had good family and friendship connections, others felt that they were not accepted in the city. All of the young adult group - and in fact, with the exception of a group of elder men, almost all of those with whom I spoke - felt that Somali people in Glasgow 'did not have a voice' in public and civic settings. Duniya agreed. She comments,

I think - like - other communities have - like -
cultural things, like cultural dances,
or activities and stuff,
while the Somali communities don't have that, cos
I have - like - uni friends, like Filipinos and that, and they
- like - once a month,
they have cultural things where they come together
and there should be - like -
we should make other people aware of our culture
because I think we're hidden

d o w n,

we're, like,

table

under the

we're not known...

our faces are just

seen

but people don't know what we're about,
you know?

Duniya argues that Somali people are invisible in Glasgow for several reasons. Firstly, she finds the way in which the Somali population mobilise community problematic: she suggests that though there is a sense of 'being Somali' amongst the population, it has not come together as a community. Secondly, she sees the (unorganised) population's engagement with 'communities' outside itself as under-realised, especially in comparison to the activities of other populations (such as those of her Filipino friends). Finally, she sees the way in which the Somali population is viewed in Glasgow as problematic. She notes that whilst the population remains 'invisible', Somali people are paradoxically 'hypervisible': unseen as members of Glasgow's community, but also seen as 'out of place' (Ahmed 2007). Duniya's diagnosis of Somali people's experiences of 'voice(lessness)' in Glasgow mobilise various definitions of 'voice'. First, it connects 'voice' to a culture of community, of collectivity, infrastructure and representation. The Somali population, Duniya suggests, does not 'have a voice' in Glasgow because it does not engage with others; but it does not engage with others because it does not engage with itself as a community. Here, Duniya's assessment talks about two forms of 'voice': one, of 'voice' as 'representation', enabled through the infrastructure of community; two, of 'voice' as the community and the social, communicative relationships enabled therein. Duniya suggests that for Somali people in Glasgow, these two forms of 'voice' must be considered together.

The final part of Duniya's diagnosis – of the Somali population's invisibility/hypervisibility in Glasgow – mobilises another understanding of 'voice'. This part of the diagnosis acknowledges that Somali people are subject to systems of representation and belonging that shape the extent to which Somali people are included

in or excluded from everyday life in Scotland. The diagnosis of the invisibility/hypervisibility paradox itself can be connected to the work of antiracist scholars such as Franz Fanon (2001), Sara Ahmed and George Yancy (2008), who argue that 'visual economies' (Ahmed, 2000, p. 22) of social inclusion enable racial, faith-based and citizenship-orientated limits to community.¹⁷ Duniya's final diagnosis therefore also associates the category of 'voice' with the practices, cultures and discourses that inform the limits of community belonging: because Somali people are not seen to 'fit' within these limits, Somali people are subject to community-based and communicative exclusions.

Not all of those with whom I spoke agreed with Duniya's assessment of the Somali population's 'voicelessness'. Some members of the population - notably elder men - argued that (through) specific projects and organisations, the Somali population not only had a centralised point of representation, but also a 'voice' in broader civic life. However - as Duniya's comments demonstrate - others did not feel the same. Many noted that the issue of Somali 'voicelessness' in Glasgow was not the result of one particular issue, but instead was a combination of circumstances both within and outside the Somali population. Some felt that the Somali population first needed to address internal divisions and differences before it tried to 'have voice' elsewhere. Some felt that more emphasis needed to be placed on (a lack of) government support that had so far inhibited mobilisations of community. Others noted the adverse effects of structural and everyday racisms upon practices of community, representation, cohesion or 'voice'.

¹⁷ I return to these themes in detail later in the thesis to discuss the impact of whiteness on Somali experiences of 'voice' in Glasgow (see Part 5).

3.2.1 Community and communication

In both the Somali-orientated and Scotland-orientated opinions about community above, community is at once an accepted but contested category. Though in a multicultural context community now sits as a category of negotiation, plurality and hybridity, it can also be associated with distinct traditions in Somali-orientated culture and the way in which civic and political life is 'imagined' in Scotland. Whilst recognising that they are under contestation, in this section I examine the norms of community for both systems to establish the premises from which they make claims about representation and 'voice'.

- **Imagining Somali community**

Having made contact with a (Somali) community organisation in Glasgow, I arranged a meeting with some of its members. Though the organisation had closed temporarily in the mid-2000s, it was the longest-running group I had come across in Glasgow. In the first of my discussions with organisation members, I met with a group of men who attended the organisation. All in their forties or above, they had lived in Glasgow since the early-2000s, but prior to that had lived in Somalia. In our discussion, I asked them to teach me about what Somali community meant to them. Waleed emphasises community based on a shared sense of 'Somali-ness':

Waleed:

The *culture*, So ma li *culture* is a bit different to African community culture...
...a good example is our neighbours,
if they meet them, they don't care to see another fellow of their country,
but a Somali,
if he puts his **leg**
on the country

he will immediately search,
 where I can get Somalis?
he will phone around,
 you know anybody live in Glasgow?

 ...so he will not slow down
until he find out Somali people
 somewhere in the town

Waleed explains that a new arrival in Glasgow will try and find other Somali people because they know that they will receive support because they are Somali. At the same time, a Somali person already resident in the city is duty-bound to support a new arrival, or another Somali person in need of help. The group agreed that Waleed's description of community support presented something of a tautological relationship between the category of community and the category of 'Somali'. Ali explains that his argument draws on a sense of lineage and ethnicity that connects Somali people through birthright and legacy. He comments,

because at the end
Somalia is where you were born
it's your country.

you wanna do something for it,
you wanna prove

 later on

that Ali from Somalia?
he did something.

For Ali, this sense of legacy was as important as his place of birth: by virtue of his birth, he had inherited Somali-ness; by virtue of his actions, he would ensure its future; and by virtue of his lineage he was unquestionably connected to all other Somali people through the complex networks of kin and community. For all the men in the group, this

sense of *being* Somali by virtue of birth was an important factor in community. Trying to test the limits of this category, I ask if community support changes if someone arrives with nothing, or with a challenging immigration status, or comes from a different background to the person they meet.

Waleed answers me,

no, the same... Somalis is Somalis

And Dinar too answers in English to emphasise,

Somali? **Somali.**

However, though, in both Waleed's and Dinar's experiences, being 'ethnically' Somali was an important element in the formation of community support in Glasgow, it was neither a prerequisite nor the only contributory factor. The conversation continues:

I interject:

so is this part of Somali culture?

Waleed confirms:

it is the basis of our culture.

*Haduu halsano cunto iska cuno waa
bilaash ilaa uu nolosha la qabsado.*

We help them for as long as
is needed, even if it's one
year.

Dinar notes

*Waa wax awoow ka awoow aan
ka soo dhaxalnay.*

This is our culture.
We have learned this.

He adds,

*Soomaalida dhaqankeeda wuxuu uga duwanyahay
dadka kale nin qura meeshuu joogo midka kale ilaa*

*uu helo ma joogaayo waa in uu raadiyaa oo soo
hela.*

Somali culture is different in that it is our
duty to reach out to other Somalis in the community.

Alongside a consideration of Somali ethnicity, Waleed and Dinar also emphasised a long-standing Somali 'culture' of community, which acted as an imperative to perform acts of solidarity for those in need. As an act of solidarity, the men stressed, Somali community-support extended across any usual social boundaries. In some cases, it might also be extended to Muslims who are familiar with Somali culture. Consideration would especially be given to Somali women's needs (childcare, healthcare, housing)¹⁸ and would be enacted by Somali women.¹⁹ According to Abdul, Waleed and Dinar, community was established only when the systems were enacted. The men's experience of practice-based community in Glasgow might be understood as 'performative' (Butler, 2011): as based on some social and discursive norms, but made reality only when the men put such normative guidance into practice. Practice-based community marked a point of contrast to lineage-led community: where the latter had concretised, fixed categories of belonging and communality, the former was self-creating and contingent on the actions of those who *performed* it. However, despite the contradictions that the two forms of community entailed, they were often thought of alongside each other. As Dinar explains to me (above), he was happy to think of Somali community as both inherent ('this is our culture') and learned ('we have learned this') because it allowed him unconditional access to community through his lineage, with the flexibility to offer the same privilege to others through practice. On this basis, Abdul, Waleed and Dinar

¹⁸ 'Haday qof dumar ah tahayna dumar ayaa loogeynayaa, joobsenter ayaa la geynaa meelo laga caawiyo ayaa la geynayaa, meelkasta la geey, Gepka la geeya o meesha housinka oo loo raaco oo loo sharxo': *If it's a woman, then we will help her with housing, and take her to the GP and help her get her jobseeker's allowance. We help her with everything.*

¹⁹ The anticipated needs of a 'Somali woman' present a particular vision of her, as I discuss below.

agreed, the Somali community in Glasgow was consistent not only *because* of the birthright of its members, but also as a result of its members enacting these community-based practices. Moreover, the community was a community *because* of this very consistency.

3.2.2 Somali commun(e)icative norms

The categories with which Abdul, Waleed and Dinar enact and define Somali community are informed by norms that maintain particular ways of 'doing' hospitality, kinship, ethnicity, faith, social and gender. Alongside other scholars,²⁰ Abdi M. Kusow argues that the foundations of many Somali cultural and social norms (Kusow, 2004) can be found in 'origin myths' about Somali people, an approach which I here find useful for thinking about how 'norms' of Somali community are 'imagined' (Anderson, [1983] 2006). Kusow cites a particular myth concerning the 'founding Somali ancestor', which tells of how the ancestor 'originated from southern Arabia, settled in the northeast region of the country and married a local Somali woman' (Kusow, 2004, p. 2).²¹ He notes,

[T]he above narrative establishes two ontological points: (1) an original, Muslim and non-indigenous founding ancestor and (2) an original dispersal point. [...] Each dimension constructs a social boundary of *Somaliness* [...] For example, the Islamic aspect of the ancestor removes those [...] who initially retained pre-Islamic cultural traditions and values and stigmatises them as less

²⁰ For example: Ali Jimale Ahmed, Ladan Affi, Omar Eno, Saafia Aidid, Hawa Y. Mire, Lidwen Kaptejins and Catherine Besteman

²¹ In the wake of this founding origin-myth, others follow - one which tells of the Arab ancestor rescuing indigenous Somalis from an evil magician King, and another which splits the now-established Arab/Somali lineage between two brothers (Kusow 2004), one of whom observes Islamic practice and the other of whom does not (Mire 2015)

than noble. The implied *Arabness* of the ancestor removes those allegedly accused of having African ancestry

(Kusow, 2004, p. 2)

Just as the news-media establishes boundaries of inclusion and exclusion for its 'imagined communities' (Anderson, [1983] 2006), origin myths establish a 'process of simultaneous exclusion and inclusion' of what it means to be Somali (Kusow, 2004, pp. 2-3). In the myths, several social and cultural categories gain prominence. Ancestry is seen to play an important role: those who are most directly descended from the founding ancestor are also seen as the most 'ethnic' realisation of the lineage. Ancestry also indicates those most directly connected to Islam (through descent from the ancestor). Race is also an indicator of ancestry and social status (discussed below). However, though it remains an important factor, ancestry is not the sole defining factor in establishing normative positions of 'Somali-ness'. Association with particular territories and ways of life are also associated with particular forms of Somali-ness, so that privilege is conferred upon those connected to the (original ancestor's) 'dispersal point' in the northern Somali territories (see also Ahmed, 1995a) and by association, to the 'northern' pastoral lifestyle. Generational hierarchies are created through an emphasis on ancestry, and elders are privileged on account of their (relative) closeness to the founding ancestor. Gendered norms also persist through origin myths that variously do not feature any women, downplay the roles of women or defer to male precedence (Mire, 2015b, Mire, 2015c, Affi, 2004). Affi notes that Somali women are 'imagined' as secondary citizens, associated with the domestic, framed as paternal property, or viewed as vessels for the extension of the paternal line (Affi, 2004, p. 93).

The norms that are created, maintained and narrativised in Somali origin myths establish an 'imagining' of a particular social structure, which is hierarchicalised

according to a diminishing scale of Somali-ness. Dominant norms include lineage, paternal lineage, Arab/African/Muslim ethnicity, race, Islam, pastoralism, and certain territorial claims. These norms are supported by systems of honour and nobility so that, for instance, those who are seen to most fully satisfy these categories have most social status. The clan system is partially based on a sliding scale of ignobility though, as Kapteijns notes, although the clan systems in Somalia are often presented as 'fixed', they are systems in fact formed of practice, negotiation and environment (Kapteijns, 2004; see also Part 4.2). Nevertheless (and for instance), the clans considered 'most noble' – the *Daarood*, *Hawiye*, *Dir*, *Isaaq* – are believed to descend from the founding ancestor, whilst the 'lesser' clans – the *Rahanween* and *Digil* – are believed to descend from his brother (Mansur, 1995, p. 123). Groups with less direct ancestry, such as the *Midgaan* (Mire, 2016), or with no descent from the founding ancestor, such as the *Bajuni*, are considered even lesser minority people (Mansur, 1995, p. 123, Besteman, 2012, Besteman, 1999). Social status is also associated with race – so that (for instance) Somalis who have features deemed 'too African' (for example, the Bantu or the Bajuni), or skin that is 'too light' (the Banadari) are narrativised as 'lesser' people (Besteman, 1996, Besteman, 2012) – and also with socioeconomic status and an urban/rural divide (Eno, 2008). In the meantime, gendered norms imply that the fullest realisation of Somali-ness is male (Mire, 2016) and displace women from public or political life, though it is worth noting here Affi's observation that framing Somali women *only* in this context risks ignoring the 'counter narratives' which tell of the agency, alternative associations and activities of Somali women within and outside of normative dominance (Affi, 2004, Choi-Ahmed, 1995; see also Part 4.2).

3.2.3 Somali community and communication

Waleed, Ali and Dinar ‘imagine’ Somali community in terms of some of the social norms made evident in the origin myths above. Membership of the ‘imagined’ Somali community is defined in terms of inclusion in the norm so that, for instance, their definition of community as ethnically derived draws on norms of lineage and ancestry. In addition, ‘practices’ of community also have normative foundations in the sense that the ‘hospitality’ of offering shelter to someone in need is bound-up in systems of kin and lineage, as well as Islam. Generational and gendered norms also inform community roles, whereby elder Somali men establish and ‘lead’ the social, civic and political elements of the community, whilst elder Somali women are tasked with the care and domestic needs of other women. As the men demonstrate in the discussion above, these norms inform the way in which community infrastructure is established and the manner with which it can be ‘inhabited’. For instance, based on the lineage system, newcomers are treated as kin and offered almost unlimited care and support. Support networks are arranged and overseen by community ‘elders’ and the type of support given is divided between the public and domestic spheres according to gender designations. In the meantime, in order to have access to the support network, a newcomer must also satisfy some of the norms of belonging – so that (for instance) they have Somali lineage, and be Muslim. They must also practice community in terms of the existing community infrastructure – for instance, orientated towards certain generational and lineage-based hierarchies. If lineage-led, faith-based, gendered and generational norms informed the infrastructure of community, they also shaped and acted upon those who sought to make use of its infrastructure. By defining who could be part of the community and how they could be part of it, the same norms made belonging conditioned and conditional.

At the same time that community norms defined the boundaries of belonging and exclusion, they also defined the boundaries of who might ‘have voice’ in the community and how they might have it. In fact, whilst much of the community infrastructure was concerned with normative belonging, it was also orientated towards normative communication. For instance, if a newcomer was able to access community support networks from a sufficiently normative position, one would also have access to the trappings of communicative and civic citizenship – social links, language classes, the right to vote, access to representational and participatory opportunities (civic ‘voice’). One would also have more chance of appearing to communicatively ‘fit’ the norm (Gunaratnam, 2013) so that one’s communicative activities would not be seen as ‘out of place’, more likely to go unchallenged and more likely to be ‘heard’. Waleed ‘imagines’ community in terms of communicative normativity. I ask,

... so if somebody wanted to come and talk to Somali people in
Glasgow,
how would they do that?

Waleed replies:

they would come to the community,
the community is collecting us... you do this too.

Waleed imagines the Somali community in Glasgow in terms of a group of people who sufficiently inhabit the same norms in the same way that they might be called a ‘collection’. The collection, he implies, would speak in terms that were sufficiently cohesive that they might be seen to ‘speak for’ – represent – the community. In return, he notes, the community – and by implications its norms – would ‘speak for’ them.

Struck by the emphasis that Waleed places on community-based and communicative cohesion, I say

... so the community seems close...

Having listened to Waleed's explanation, Dinar tempers his answer in Somali,

Inta u badan waa saas.
[For the most part.]

However Waleed, seeing a challenge to his previous description of community interprets Dinar's response to me with a slightly different emphasis:

absolutely.

Though Waleed's description of Somali community emphasises cohesiveness and adherence to particular social and cultural norms, it is clear that his description did not find universal agreement even amongst a group of his peers. Omar also sought to provide a cautionary note to their claims of cohesiveness and singular representation. He notes that though normative Somali community structures should be valued for the networks of support and kin that they enable, they should also be recognised as problematic. He observes that whilst 'traditional' community infrastructures provide a sense of continuity from their expression in Somalia, they also bring 'traditional' issues with them. He comments,

that's the problem, yeah, to be honest.

Somalis? they are not kind of like to be **u n i t e d**

Omar argues that in broad terms, Somali people struggle to find a 'united voice' because (rather paradoxically) the hierarchical infrastructure on which community is built causes a degree of community fragmentation. Kapteijns notes that hierarchical Somali social systems incentivise competition, where power and status is afforded to the person or

group that (is seen to) most 'inhabit' the norm (Kapteijns, 2004). Omar's own experience in Glasgow confirms Kapteijns's observations. He recounts his own experience of attempting to be an active community member. He explains,

the problem with [traditional community]
is that there are only a few [...] that are the 'right' people for the job,
so, if you're a young person who's determined,
and has the capability
of [doing] whatever [a community 'leader'] was doing,
and you know you can do far better job than that person,
the community will somehow bring you down...

In the example that Omar gives, he feels he is not able to contribute to or shape the community because his youth places him further down the community structure. He notes that generational norms put him at some distance of 'inhabiting' the status that would allow him a 'voice' with sufficient status to be heard. Based on his experience, Omar questions the extent to which 'the community' can be considered representative of him because - based on this generational hierarchy - he has 'less' of a 'voice'. Omar's experience highlights the difficulties of access that hierarchical community structures present for those without normative privilege. It is worth noting here that as a tertiary-educated, practicing Muslim man, Omar himself has a degree of social privilege within normative community structures, and others without these privileges might have less access and face more social, cultural and political barriers to 'have voice' in the community. As I will also discuss in following chapters, there are a number of ways with which those who do not occupy 'the norm' negotiate their position within and outside of community structures (see Part 4). For the time being and with reference to Omar's experience, a point that despite being self-evident nevertheless bears repeating,

is that though many people in Glasgow may be part of a Somali population, this does not mean that they have the same experiences, nor that they have parity of communicative access.

3.2.4 'Voice' and community in Scotland

For the majority of those with whom I spoke, the infrastructure, practice and culture of community remained closely associated with the extent to which Somali people (did not) 'have voice' in Glasgow. However, as Duniya's opening comments observe, Somali experiences of 'voice' and community were not restricted to Somali norms and values. Rather they were also subject to, and developed in combination with, ideas about the relationship between 'voice' and community in Scotland. In the same way that Somali social and cultural norms informed who was included and excluded within Somali community communicative dynamics, systems of 'voice' and community in Scotland also informed communicative belongings and exclusions. In Scotland, traditions of 'voice' and community have developed alongside ideas about democracy, the nation, national identity, freedom and equality (see below). Since the turn of the Millennium, these traditions have been shaped by the parallel contexts of devolution and Dispersal, and have seen a rhetoric of community and 'voice' attached to categories of 'multiculturalism' and citizenship. This trajectory has shaped ideas about the relationship between community and 'voice' in Scotland in particular ways, as I discuss below. This is not the place for an in-depth analysis of the development of this relationship; however, for reference and information, I lightly sketch-out the key points in the relationship since 2000 below.

- **‘A voice to shape Scotland, a voice for the future’**

Just as (some) Somali community norms are established through Somali ‘origin myths’, ideas about citizenship and belonging in Scotland not only rely on creating a normative ‘imagining’ of community but also a normativity of ‘voice’. Following Devolution in 1999, Donald Dewar opened the new Scottish Parliament with a speech stating the following:

In the quiet moments today, we might hear some echoes from the past:

The shout of the welder in the din of the great Clyde shipyards; The speak of the Mearns, with its soul in the land; The discourse of the enlightenment, when Edinburgh and Glasgow were a light held to the intellectual life of Europe; The wild cry of the Great Pipes; And back to the distant cries of the battles of Bruce and Wallace.

The past is part of us. But today there is a new voice in the land, the voice of a democratic Parliament. A voice to shape Scotland, a voice for the future.

(Dewar, 1999)

Dewar's speech sees the newly established Scottish Parliament as the democratic representation of the voices of the people within Scotland's national boundaries. In Dewar's speech, 'voice' and community are bounded by the same categories of language, culture and history, and tied to a sense of place and land. The speech emphasises Scotland's plural communities as part of its democratic project; however, its focus is notably on people, history and culture within Scotland's borders. Twelve years later, following a period of considerable social, demographic and political change, Alex Salmond, leading the first overall majority parliament, develops Dewar's rhetoric:

When Donald Dewar addressed this parliament in 1999, he evoked Scotland's diverse voices: [...]

Now, these voices of the past are joined in this chamber by the sound of 21st-century Scotland; the lyrical Italian of Marco Biagi, the formal Urdu of Humza Yousaf, the sacred Arabic of Hanzala Malik.

We are proud to have those languages spoken here alongside English, Gaelic, Scots and Doric.

This land is their land, [...] it belongs to all who choose to call it home.

(Salmond, 2011)

Salmond's speech foregrounds Scotland as a nation with multicultural precedent. Acknowledging Dewar's bounding of language, culture and history, he widens Scotland's boundaries to include communities with heritage outside its landed borders. Scotland, he suggests, is a 'choice': if one chooses to be part of the Scottish project, one will have as equal a right to be heard as any, and one's 'voice', background and culture will be accepted on equal terms.

Salmond's speech is a departure from Dewar's in the sense that it moves away from an emphasis on Scottish citizenship in terms solely of a connection between place of birth, nationality and territory, and instead 'imagines' a 'civic' citizenship based on participation, reciprocal hospitality (Hill, 2016) and a desire to 'be here' (Meer, 2015, p. 16). These nods to civic citizenship and the will 'to be here' in Salmond's speech might be associated with a history of with what Arshad terms 'meritocratic egalitarianism' (Arshad, 2008, p. 16). Arshad argues that the principles of 'meritocratic egalitarianism' are drawn from a Knoxian emphasis of civic belonging and opportunity 'on the basis of merit, hard work, ambition and seriousness of purpose' (Arshad, 2008, p. 16; quotes Devine, 2001 p.391). These same principles have become a 'badge of [Scottish] identity' (Devine, 2001, p. 389) which informed much of the 'civic nationalism' of the pro-Scottish Independence movement in 2014 and the pro-Europe movement in 2016. Within these principles, civic belonging, community and equality of access and

opportunity are closely linked: one can become a citizen of Scotland on the basis of one's actions, choices and commitment to Scotland; on this basis, one can be considered as equally citizen, with equal access to the rights of citizenship as all others. Within the democratic context of a devolved Scottish Parliament, one's 'voice' (as Salmond explains above) will contribute to what Scotland represents and, in return, Scotland will represent one's 'voice'.

This vision of Scotland as a place of 'civic' citizenship draws on particular ideas about democracy, freedom and equality. In this vision, democracy is imagined as the representative vehicle of the 'voice of the people', in which all citizens have parity of



*Figure 3.5: Front page headline in July 2016 in *The National* following early talks between the First Minister and EU representatives (The National, 2016)*

access and 'voice'. In Scotland, particular ideas of both freedom and equality underpin this vision of democracy. Democracy here is imagined to support the choice, expression and self-determination of 'the people' – principles which, Mahmood argues, must be associated with 'positive freedom', which defines 'freedom' in terms of agency and selfhood (Mahmood, 2011, p. 10). As civic (Scottish) citizenship is based on one's *choice* to 'be here', civic, Scottish citizenship is therefore informed

by ‘positive freedom’ and its norms of agency, expression and selfhood. As I discussed in Part 2.1, these norms are also often associated with categories of ‘voice’ (which expresses oneself, one’s choice or one’s agency). In Scotland, one’s ‘choice’ to ‘be here’ is therefore understood both as the expression of oneself and one’s ‘voice’, so that citizenship is almost imagined as a ‘speech act’ (Butler, 1997): one says one wants to become part of Scotland’s community and one becomes part of Scotland’s community. Once part of Scotland’s community, one is subject to Scotland’s principles of ‘equality’, which based on long-held values of ‘egalitarianism’, insist that ‘all people are equal, should be treated equally and have equality of opportunity’ (Arshad, 2008, p. 37). As a result, these principles say, if one is part of Scotland’s community, and one’s community membership *is* ‘voice’, one has parity of access and opportunity to Scotland’s vocal infrastructure.

3.2.5 ‘Voice’, community, Somali people and Scotland

However, as Duniya’s opening comments suggest, the reality of the relationship between ‘voice’ and community for Somali people in Scotland is somewhat removed from Salmond’s rhetoric. Certainly, though Salmond primarily espouses ideas about ‘civic citizenship’, this is not the only form of citizenship that is mobilised in Scotland. Rather, these ideas also come into contact with other ideas about citizenship – such as multiculturalism, or the idea of the nation in the UK – and become complicated (Soule et al., 2012). Meer argues that, as Scotland’s status and relationship with the rUK is framed in terms of its nationhood (that is, that it remains distinct and bounded from other nations or the overall UK by territorial, social, cultural and political categories), discussions and ‘imaginings’ of citizenship within Scotland return to the idea of ‘the nation’ (Meer, 2015, p. 4). As work by Hussain and Miller has suggested (Hussain and

Miller, 2006), this has resulted in the close proximation of multicultural agendas which are also orientated towards 'imaginings' of the nation. To the norms of 'civic' community above then, norms of 'the nation' might also be added, and instantly made messy: from the complex interaction between the (imaginative and political) maintenance of a national border (Leith, 2012) and the dissolution of bordered citizenship, to offering 'national' hospitality without full state sovereignty (Hill, 2016), to the expression of a 'shared experience' of colonial oppression with minority ethnic groups (Hussain and Miller, 2006) alongside (often under-addressed (Meer, 2015)) complicity in the project of Empire (Mycock, 2012, Heuchan, 2016).

In addition, as Arshad observes, the principle of 'meritocratic egalitarianism' upon which Salmond develops his claims about civic citizenship contains 'considerable tensions' (Arshad, 2008, p. 16), and is problematic because it fails to acknowledge the effects of structural inequality. Writing in a pre-Devolution context, Causey et al suggest that Scottish egalitarianism is 'naïve egalitarianism' (Causey et al., 2000, p. 34). Arshad agrees and expands:

The belief is that all people are equal, should be treated equally and have equality of opportunity. The fact that we are not starting from a clean sheet and that not everyone is at the same starting point, which therefore means inequality is inherently present, is conveniently ignored

(Arshad, 2008, p. 37)

Arshad's observations were echoed in Somali experiences of community in Scotland. On the one hand, Somali people felt that egalitarian approaches to citizenship in Scotland meant that they had been accepted both as a community and as part of Scotland's community. For instance, Hawa, who was in her forties and had lived in Glasgow for thirteen years comments,

*Laakiin waxaa jira dad na fahan san, siiba dadka
dowladda u shaqeeya. Iyaga waxeey fahansan yihiin in
dadkan aay Muslim yihiin kana imaadeen waddan ka
duwan waddankooda. Waxeey aqoon u leeyihiin
diinteena. Kuwaasi waa kuwa dowladda u shaqeya oo
fahmayana arrimahan oo kale.*

But there are people who understand,
for example people who work for the government.
They understand that these people are Muslims
and that they came from a different place.
They recognise our religion.
These are people that work for the government
and understand this type of things.

However, Hawa observed, though in principle Somali people were included in Scotland's egalitarian community dynamics, there were many circumstances in which the specific social and cultural barriers encountered by Somali people in Scotland were unaccounted for. She continues,

*Wax caawinaad ah aay ka helaan dowladda ma jirto,
iyagana ma heystaan dad ka caawiya arrintaasi.
Dowladda waa ineey na caawintaa, ilmaheena waxeey u
baahan yihiin meel ay ku kulmaan. Waxaan u
baahanahey dad na matala oo u dooda xuquuqdeena.
Waxaan u baahanahey in aan dowladda xiriir yeelano.
Dowladana waa ineey inoo aqoonsato inaan nahey dad
jira oo kcommunity ah.*

The government doesn't help [the community],
they don't have people who can help them.
The government must help us,

children need to find a place where they can congregate.
We need people who can speak on our behalf and rights.
We need to deal with the government.
The government must recognise us a functioning community

Hawa explains that specific issues faced by the Somali population in Glasgow – such as inadequate youth facilities, or social and cultural isolation – were simply not recognised by Scottish authorities. As I will discuss later in this thesis (see Part 5.1), this had led to gaps in provision that had affected both the development and practice of Somali community in Glasgow. It also had implications for the extent to which Somali people felt represented in Scotland. Though on the one hand, Somali people felt that Scotland provided opportunities of citizenship and ‘voice’, on the other they were also aware that Scotland also presented barriers to their participation and representation in public life.

3.2.6 Commun(e)icative fragmentation and cohesion

Faced with the internal oxymoron of cohesive, fragmented community and the external tension between inclusion and exclusion in a Scottish community, questions of invisibility, visibility and ‘voice’ for Somali people in Glasgow were therefore not simple, and nor were their answers. Drawing on these themes of cohesion and fragmentation, inclusion and exclusion, voice and community, I spend the remainder of this thesis providing a response to these questions. In structure, I echo Duniya’s diagnosis above: I first consider the impact of ‘internal’ community practices and infrastructures on Somali experiences of ‘voice’ (Part 4), and second give attention to the ‘external’ infrastructures of belonging and citizenship that affect Somali people’s vocal practices in Glasgow.

Part 4: Somali Commun(e)ity and the Glasgow Effect

Part 3 highlights the complexity of the connection between community and communication for Somali people in Glasgow City. It notes both that Somali community norms remain influential for how people navigate their belonging and ‘voice’, and that (‘imagined’) political, public and social ‘communities’ in Glasgow also directly impact the Somali populations communicative accesses and citizenships in the city. Parts 4 and 5 attempt to make visible the complexities of ‘voice’ that Somali people in Glasgow encounter and negotiate on an everyday basis.

Part 4 is focuses on the extent to which internal practices and infrastructures of community impact Somali experiences of ‘voice’. It first considers the extent to which usually dominant features of Somali community – including lineal and clan-based infrastructures, and generational and gendered hierarchies – feature in Glasgow-based Somali people’s experiences. Second, it considers the extent to which the social and cultural environment of Glasgow City features has shaped practices of community. Finally, it considers how and the extent to which these Glasgow-based practices of Somali community have impacted people’s experiences of ‘voice’. To do this, I have divided Part 4 into three sections. Part 4.1 traces the effects of lineal norms affect ‘majority’ Somali experiences of both ‘voice’ and community in Glasgow. Part 4.2 considers the extent to which gendered norms shape Somali women’s vocal experiences. Part 4.3 focuses on the experiences of a group of non-lineal Somali people (the Bajuni), who, caught in multiple commun(e)icative exclusions, must try and find alternative ways of ‘having voice’ in the city.

4.1 Considering Clan

Though experiences of Somali experiences of community were made complex in the environment of Glasgow city, there were nevertheless some internal community practices with which the large majority of those with whom I spoke were familiar. One of these was the Somali practice of clan. For Ishmail, clan added an extra layer to the belongings and exclusions he had to negotiate in the city. He comments,

in a new country you find people who share your religion, your language,
but then within your [group]...
like, within a football team,
you see the one who wears the same socks as you?
I think it works the same.

In Ishmail's opinion, clan could offer a sense of belonging in broad contexts of 'community, so that, he suggests,

there's hierarchy... there's British, Scottish, Somali, clan.

However, Ishmail was also quick to note that clan could not be considered a fix-all for internal community fragmentation; in fact, as we continued our conversation, he identified it to be as much a source of unease and mistrust as it was a unifier.

As a way of understanding and talking about Somali social politics, clan has a complex and difficult history. As I briefly discussed in the preceding chapter, clan can be understood as the way in which Somali people are grouped and organised according to broad systems of lineage, which are orientated towards paternal descent from a common, Muslim, Arab ancestor. In practice, clan provides a diffuse and considerable network of family kin, and works on multiple levels, from a person's clan group, to their sub-clan, to their family group and finally to their *diya* group ('blood money'

group), which is responsible for a member's economic and personal wellbeing (Omar, 2014). However, whilst clan practices provide networks of solidarity, the way in which clan politics has been mobilised by those in power has also made it a source of division. Lidwen Kapteijns argues that throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, clan was made a 'technology of power' (Kapteijns, 2004, p. 8) by both colonial and Somali administrations, which used its hierarchical systems to enforce their rule. By empowering those at the top of the clan hierarchies to maintain administrative 'order', these administrations emphasised clan hierarchy as competitive and unequal, yet institutionally endorsed (Ahmed, 1995a, pp. 143-144). As a result, in Somali society, clan has been narrativised as a major social organiser so that, Kapteijns argues, people 'were encouraged to understand their economic and political situation' primarily 'in terms of clan' (Kapteijns, 2004, p. 13). Mobilised at the centre of Somali social infrastructure, clan was also seen as central to Somali social breakdown, so that the widespread and endemic violences of the civil war and subsequent conflicts were therefore orientated towards, and informed by, 'clan factionalism' (Gundel, 2009, p. 11).

For many Somali people today, clan politics are therefore indicted with some unease. Whilst clan social systems attempt to provide widespread and unconditional support according to which lineage one belongs, they remain haunted both by the spectre of how the same lineage systems were violently politicised in the conflict, and how they were mobilised in a post-conflict context (Botan, 1997, Kapteijns, 2004). As such, even as clan is recognised for its potential solidarities, its potential for division also remains a source of concern (Sheikh, 1997). Throughout the last century, clan has also travelled with Somali people to diasporic environments and has informed to varying degrees the ways in which community has been organised outside Somalia

(Griffiths, 1999, Choudhury, 2015, Hopkins, 2006). However, whilst clan now appears in many global settings, it does not necessarily appear in the 'same' form. Contrary to previous scholarship (Lewis, 1999), Kapteijns argues that whilst clan might appear to be a 'concrete' and 'fixed' part of Somali society, its systems are in fact negotiable and have historically adapted to the environments in which people find themselves. In the UK, clan is mobilised in a number of ways by people of Somali heritage (Kapteijns, 2004). It is mobilised differently again in a Glaswegian context, in which the post-Dispersal, geographic/cultural, socioeconomic contexts remain influential. In contrast to other cities in the UK, Ishmail observes that, whilst it 'exists' in Glasgow,

there's not an obvious relationship between clans at the moment, I don't think ...

This chapter considers the extent to which clan is an ongoing factor in the way in which Somali community is practiced in Glasgow city. Whilst tracing a relationship between clan practices and communicative 'inhabitations', it attempts to make apparent who 'has voice' within its infrastructure, and how. It also specifically focuses on how the context of Glasgow itself has affected clan practice, and the implications this has for communicative activities both within and outside of community infrastructure.

4.1.1 Clan and me: a brief comment

Employed as the central unit of analysis of Somali society by the influential anthropologist and colonial administrator, I. M. Lewis, clan has retained both its central position – and its colonial lens – ever since (Kapteijns, 2004, Aidid, 2015b). Kapteijns argues that in the works that focus on clan as *the* way to understand Somali society, colonial logics have been reproduced and solidified (Kapteijns, 2004). Though Lewis's

emphasis and lens has since been successfully critiqued (see Part 2.2), clan continues to dominate scholarship about Somali people, sometimes with obscuring results. Scholarship about clan by outsiders – and especially white scholars (Aidid, 2015c) – is sometimes in danger of (re)producing the system as a ‘technology of power’ and by unduly emphasising it as *the* defining element of Somali community, reducing Somali ‘communities’ to a series of surface-level stereotypes. This chapter does not seek to emphasise clan as *the* definitive element of being Somali in Glasgow; rather, it tries to present it as one element of many that inform commun(e)ity in the city.

In the meantime, my presence and influence on this topic should not be understated. Clan is often a ‘culturally intimate’ and often linguistically-informed practice (Bjork, 2007, p. 135). My interactions with clan in this chapter remain as an ‘outsider’ and in this sense is limited. The narrative below, though of course led by those who participated in the research, is nonetheless informed by my ‘outsider’ status and linguistic limitations. Aware that incomplete information can lead to misrepresentation, in the following I do not name clans, nor affiliate myself with one or another, nor explore their internal politics; rather, I look at how clan functions as a communicative practice, and its effects on Somali ‘voices’ in Glasgow.


4.1.2 Clan and communication in the diaspora

For Somali populations that have settled in other parts of the UK and Europe, clan has remained a disputed but ubiquitous presence. However, though clan is broadly practiced across different populations, it is not necessarily practiced in the same way, and can be influenced by location, political climate, population demographics and population longevity.

For instance, David Griffiths's ethnography of Somali populations in London in the 1990s found that clan remained a political actor in the community, with clan-orientated divisions transposing almost directly into the London context. One of his participants notes, 'everything that goes wrong out there...it affects us over here. [...] We are here – still, not emotionally. Politically we are over there all the time' (Griffiths, 1997, p. 10). Griffiths's work notes high rates of unemployment, language difficulties, gendered and generational divisions and high crime rates amongst the London population, which he suggests were mobilisations of clan divisions (Griffiths, 1997). He argues that the Somali community's longevity in London also assisted in concretising clan political divisions by spatialising the differences across the London boroughs that were demarcated according to which clan occupied which location (Griffiths, 1999, p. 156).²² Griffiths argues that clan initially actively worked against community formation, as it enforced internal political divisions and patrilineal hierarchies. He identifies it as a key element in the London Somali communities' initial struggles to gain public representation and 'voice'.

Hussain agrees with this analysis. Having lived in various different Somali communities, including in Somalia, in Europe and in London, he argues that clan systems across all sites encourages a representative self-interest:

it's like, for example

I say Somali,
but I'm not really Somali,
I'm an individual  I'm from that clan:
I'm from that clan,
...it's that circle

²² So that, for example, Somalis from the south are located in Camden and Islington; southern Somalis from Darod lineage are in Kilburn, those of the Hawiye are in Streatham and the northern Isaaq are in Tower Hamlets (Griffiths 1999, 156).

Hussain argues that this particular mobilisation of clan infrastructure can only promote communicative inequalities because it relies upon norms that encourage social hierarchy based on exclusions of ethnicity, race and lineage. He comments,

it's about that sense of superiority, it's like, I'm better than you [...] there's that sense of superiority and I think it came from Italian colonisation, cos there's Mussolini and the Aryan Race type of thing

Hussain makes a similar connection to Kapteijns between the hierarchicalisation of clan and colonial structures. Like Kapteijns, he likens its infrastructure to discriminatory 'technologies of power' that place ethnic and racial exclusions in association with power. Through clan infrastructure, he suggests, Somali people have traditionally established communicative hierarchy and competition, in which those who (are seen to) most inhabit community norms gain representational power. As a result of this relationship, Hussain argues, clan must always be seen as politicised and potentially divisive, as must any communication that is made through its infrastructure or in its name. In the UK, there have been instances of this occurring in Manchester and London, where 'community development' funding caused competition for, and subsequent disagreements over, resources among Somali community organisations, which had been stratified along clan lines (Griffiths et al., 2006). In other cities in the UK and Europe with historic Somali populations, clan memberships have also been concretised in community infrastructure, including Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham (Griffiths et al., 2006), Leicester (Hussain, 2014) and in other European locations (Choudhury, 2015).

Griffiths's work has been influential in how UK Somali populations have subsequently been understood. However, rather than using his work as a blueprint for the contemporary situation in Glasgow, it is worth instead taking into account both the Somali context and the context of the London Somali population at the time at which Griffiths conducted his ethnography. Throughout the 1990s, Somalia remained in a violent conflict that was often exacerbated by clan divisions, and the active influence of these dynamics upon the London population was considerable (Warfa et al., 2012). At the same time, any conflict-inspired, clan-orientated divisions were further enabled by the longevity of the London Somali population which, having lived in the capital since the nineteenth century, already had organisations that were sufficiently well-established and well-funded that they were able to offer clan-based rather than alternative support (Harris, 2004, Griffiths et al., 2006). In the London of the 1990s, it might be argued, clan – and its conflicts – had been transposed to the capital, but its transposition had been influenced and enabled by the sociopolitical context in which it occurred, and the backgrounds of the population who were there at the time.

However, whilst many of the structures and political divisions may have been transposed to London, they did not all remain the same. Griffiths notes that the UK context in which the new population settled actively affected patrilineal structures, when welfare provision enabled for some women a degree of gender equity that had not previously been experienced, and presented a context in which traditional gendered clan hierarchies could be questioned (Griffiths, 1997). Liberatore's later ethnography of Somali communities in London also emphasises how practices of clan are changing and being challenged, especially by the younger generations of people of Somali heritage who negotiate plural and hybrid belongings between different communities and social categories (Liberatore, 2013). Amongst younger generations particularly, she observes

a loosening of clan practices and, due to their association with the Somali conflict, an association by the youth of clan with 'old fashioned' ways of being Somali (Liberatore, 2013, p. 60). Where both ethnographies are interested in changing clan practices, they are also careful to suggest that clan norms are not the only influential categories in how clan infrastructure develops in the UK. Griffiths suggests that analyses that only focus upon clan involves a 'simplification of clan identities and the reduction of other sources of identity and alignment to those of clanship. [...] The language of clan is often a coded way of referring to more complex sources of division' (Griffiths, 1999, p. 148).

If the London context facilitates particular practices and mobilisations of clan, other locations in which Somali populations are settled also have some environmental influence. Whilst both Griffiths's and Liberatore's ethnographies emphasise the way in which clan precludes points of fragmentation in London, Stephanie Bjork's work with the smaller Somali population in Helsinki finds a slightly different dynamic (Bjork, 2007). Though clan politics remain a factor in people's lives, Bjork notes that clan also has a communicative and 'intimate' element to it. Bjork suggests that in certain European environments where Somali people are isolated from other populations, clan creates a sense of 'cultural intimacy' by bounding 'the community' in terms of the cultural and linguistic competences required to enact clan networks, and by holding it as a point of contrast to external 'communities' (Bjork, 2007, p. 151). In Bjork's ethnography, clan might be primarily understood as a communicative act, which firstly might influence the way in which someone speaks Somali, and which secondly is embedded in naming protocols. In these settings, Bjork argues that the 'telling', revelation of, or 'reading' of clan through naming and linguistic cues can be used strategically to establish the communicative conditions of an interaction (Bjork, 2007, see also Omaar, 2007, p. 83). In other settings not emphasised in Bjork's work,

communicative elements of clan can be found woven into the oral narratives with which Somali community is imagined (Ahmed, 1995a, Abokor, 1993, Mire, 2016, Kusow, 2004), and in the celebratory language used to mark a social event. In these circumstances, clan is embedded in communicative and social relationships; it is both the thing that is communicated, and the way that the thing is communicated.

If clan practices of Somali populations in diasporic settings are influenced not only by clan norms, but also by demographic, population-based and environmental factors, then it follows that clan practices in Glasgow – if any such exist – should be understood in the context in which they arise. As a city without historic precedent for significant Somali populations, and with the population developing in the main from a post-Dispersal context, Glasgow presents very different environmental categories to other cities in the UK in which Somali people are settled. Due also to Dispersal, the demographic of the Somali population is different to other sites, brought to the city not by kin or clan based affiliations but by the Scheme's imposition of mandatory movement. These various factors create the possibility of clan in Glasgow being realised through different means and systems to other sites in the UK. They also have communicative consequences: if clan practices can be understood as both communicatively indicted and contextually-specific, the ways in which clan relates to community and commun(e)ity in Glasgow are likely to feed into how, and the extent to which, people of Somali heritage 'have voice' in the city.

4.1.3 Clan and communication in Glasgow

Drawing on his own experiences of living in Somalia, in Europe, in London and in Glasgow, Faraax suggests that clan practices in the city are different to other contexts. He explains,

It's difficult in Glasgow, in Scotland,
because Somalis are very little here
and it's difficult to see the relation [to clan], but you can,
as a Somali you see it...

... you see it, but it's not like [if you're a child]
'you're from that clan, we're not going to play with you',
it's not that...
because [clan] is *inculcated*
in the sense of Somali society,
clan is part and parcel of Somali society from day zero...

...from day zero you have colonialism,
after colonialism, it just becomes toxic you know?
And after the civil war, clans were fighting each other,
bang bang bang
and then, let's stop the war...
...but when you stop the war, it's the victor's justice
and lands were occupied that were never oppressed,
houses were taken,
so the powerful clans are running Somalia at the moment -
- those clans that won the war -
with the help of the international community...

...am I making sense?

That reflects... that doesn't reflect here,
because regardless of the clan you're from,
you're treated the same but there is...
it's part of your living in the Somali community.

Faraax's explanation of how clan is practiced in Glasgow is complex and multi-layered.
He suggests that the context of the Somali population in the city has itself some
influence on how clan has so far been mobilised, and implies that the (small) size of the
population has meant that clan practices have so far been limited (more on this

momentarily). At the same time, he observes that clan remains a factor in community dynamics. Like Kapteijns, he links the consolidation of clan with colonialism, violence and power to its contemporary politicised and hierarchical form. He suggests that this mobilisation of clan has some hold over how clan is practiced in Glasgow, yet even as he makes the suggestion, he retracts his claim. He maps out clan's contradictions in the city: it is embedded ('inculcated', even) in everyday practice, yet it does not affect relationships; it has no impact on one's membership to the Somali community, yet it sets one apart from it; it 'reflects... [but] it doesn't reflect here'. Faraax's description of clan practices in Glasgow moves between two experiences: the first, of a shared and familiar cultural practice amongst Somali people in Glasgow; the second, of the political pressures of clan, of the potential difficulties it presents, and its continuing social power.

In a separate conversation, Nadifa, a woman in her forties, who has lived in Glasgow for six years, tried to explain the dynamic to me. Though she recognised the potential for clan to be politically divisive, she associated clan practices in Glasgow more with cultures of care and support. She comments,

*Illaa goortii aay dowladda dhacdey, raggii waxey wada
doonayaan ineey madaxweyne iskaaga sharaxaan
gobolkii uu qabiilkiisa ka yimi, taasina weeyna
burburisey*

Since the government fell,
men want to be president of their respective clans
that's our downfall.

*Somalidu markeey dhibaato siyaasadeed taagan tahay
ayeey qabiil u kala qeybsamaan. Goorta aay dhibaato*

jirto, weey is caawiyaan. Daris ahaan arrintaas ayaan qabnaa. Marka qof uu arko qof kaloo dhibaateysan oo Somali ah, weey u yeeraan waxeyna weeydiyaan sideey u caawimi lahaayeen. Somalida ineey isla nooladaan weey jecel yihiin. Dhibaatada qabiilku waxaa la arkaa keliya marka siyaasad laga hadlayo.

Somalis, when they have political issues, [then] they are divided as clans. When they have difficulties, they help each other. As neighbours they are the same. [In Glasgow] when someone sees another Somali in trouble, they call them and ask how can I help you. [...] Clan issues are related to politics.

Nadifa suggests that clan becomes a divisive issue only when it is politicised, which she feels is not the case in Glasgow (though she does not discount its potential). Instead, she suggests that in Glasgow, clan can be mostly understood in terms of community support, kinship, solidarity and belonging. Notably, she associates the politicising of clan with gendered roles of community representation (discussed further in Part 4.2); however, she associates this dynamic with Somalia rather than Glasgow. Khadija, two decades younger than Nadifa, agreed with her assessment. She observes that whilst people are certainly aware of the potential for these politicised (and gendered) dynamics, she sees little evidence of them in Glasgow. ‘What kind of politics are men doing here?!’ she asks me. With some dryness she observes, ‘I’m not sure. ... I don’t see any activity around here’.

There was a broad consensus that clan in Glasgow was certainly not as concretised as it was in London or other cities in the UK. Rather than exerting overt political influence over people of Somali heritage in Glasgow, it was more of a

background noise that informed community and cultural norms. Clan practices were therefore enacted by those in the city, and whilst people were aware and wary of their political potential, they mobilised them more as an everyday act of 'being Somali'. In this sense, as background and everyday acts of a shared belonging, culture and support, clan practices in Glasgow might be considered activities that build a similar sense of 'cultural intimacy' to that identified by Bjork in the Helsinki-Somali population (Bjork, 2007, p. 135). In the Helsinki context, Bjork argues, clan practices are mobilised not for political matters but for community-building reasons because they 'provide insiders with their assurance of common sociability' and allow people to identify familiar community settings alongside possibilities for support and solidarity (Bjork, 2007, p. 137). In Helsinki, Bjork argues, a sense of clan as 'cultural intimacy' was embedded in its communicative practices and competencies to the extent that they played an active role in the maintenance of the community's 'cultural intimacy'. If clan practices are similarly implicated in creating a sense of 'cultural intimacy' in Glasgow, to what extent are communicative practices involved? And how might this (de)mobilise 'voice'?

4.1.4 Cultural intimacy and communicative practices in Glasgow

In Glasgow, communicative and cultural 'tells' were one of the few ways in which clan was identified and featured in people's lives. As I discuss below, these 'tells' were sited in the languaged aspects of everyday practice; however, language was not the only communicative means through which clan was realised. Rather, alongside linguistic practice, mobilisations of silence also frequently took place. Each communicative activity worked to achieve 'cultural intimacy' in different ways; however, even as they

established some shared and common ground for the population in Glasgow, they also hovered on the potential for communicative and community disunity.

- **Linguistic aspects of clan**

Just as other Somali populations in different sites mobilised linguistic and cultural competences to 'tell' clan, people in Glasgow were aware of, and made use of, languaged aspects of clan. However, in Glasgow they took on slightly different dynamics. Ishamil, like a number of young Somali men in Glasgow, initially lived in London before arriving in Scotland. He notes some key differences between the context in London and the context in Glasgow:

If you go to London, you see a lot of shops open and they're clan based
but you can't give evidence that that's clan...

so how do you know?! Now I'm speculating!

You know because ...

there's a linguistic element like a certain way people speak...

but it's very tiny

Ishmail explains that unlike the established clan systems in London, clan systems in Glasgow are neither fully institutionalised nor spatialised (Isotalo, 2007). In London, Ishmail explains, people's spatialised practices of clan allowed him to 'read' their affiliations. In Glasgow, he observes, this sort of politicised (and spatialised) clan-based infrastructure is not established, so 'tells' come down to cultural and linguistic competence. 'Tells' might appear in everyday interactions such as greetings or naming practices; they also might appear in subtle linguistic features in a person's spoken Somali. Cabdi, Ifrah, Mariyam and Abdul, who were all in their late teens, attempted to explain the dynamic to me:

Abdul: yeah, we all have different accents

Ifrah: some speak better than others

Cabdi [*whispers to Abdul*]: yours is very special!

[There are sniggers in the group...]

Mariyam: every city basically has its own dialect, every city so... [...]

Ifrah: like in the community we speak a certain way, like I wouldn't understand but my parents, if they were to hear like another person speak Somali, they would kinda understand what part of Somalia they come from

From this point, the conversation moves on. However, as the others begin to discuss other topics, Mariyam makes an additional comment that only my audio-recording picks up:

Mariyam: [*whispers to Ifrah*]: *T R I B E*

The group explain to me that in Somalia there are a wide range of regional accents. Though clan membership is not exclusively associated with territories, it is often associated with particular regions in Somalia. As a result, regional accents, or the linguistic turns of phrase associated with a particular people or place, can sometimes be used to 'tell' clan.

The linguistic aspects of clan practice in Glasgow created a sense of 'cultural intimacy' amongst the community because they required a certain degree of Somali cultural and communicative knowledge to be able to hear and understand their significance. Linguistic and cultural competences established boundaries of belonging in the community by not only demonstrating through language-use a shared and common investment in Somali cultural heritage, but also a shared membership of the

social and solidarity networks associated with clan. Without other ‘tells’ of clan in Glasgow, language-practices sometimes took on additional importance, as their ‘iterative performance’ (Butler, 1997) was one of the only ways in which the ‘cultural intimacy’ of clan could be communicated.²³

- **Silence and intimacy**

If ‘*iterative* performance’ was an important part of establishing clan as a ‘culturally intimate’ practice in Glasgow, non-iterative performance played an equally important role. Throughout the fieldwork, silence and clan were consistently and closely related, and my enquiries about clan were often (but not always) met with evasions, denials, refusals, a wish not to talk about it, or, as in Mariyam’s case above, sufficient moderation of speech to ensure its contents reached only a particular audience. Silences are at times a difficult communicative activity to talk about as their content and motivations are literally left unsaid. As I discuss below, my role and status as an ‘outsider’ certainly had an effect on the extent to which people wished to discuss the topic. However, there are other reasons too, and as I got to better know groups and individuals, I was able to observe and learn more about the dynamics of silence and clan in Glasgow.

Reliant on cultural norms of lineage, paternal inheritance, generation and ancestry, normative clan practices might be considered ‘culturally intimate’ for the way in which they create clearly demarcated boundaries of belonging that are open only to those who qualify through descent. However, I would suggest, whilst these cultural norms remain influential, their related communicative norms – and especially the practice of silence – is equally so. Ishmail makes the same argument. He observes that

²³ Whilst linguistic practice emphasised ‘cultural intimacy’, they did not do this in the same way for everyone, as Ifrah’s comments above suggest, and as I discuss below.

the clan system works because of its emphasis to 'keep it in the family'. Half-joking, he compares it another well-known 'family' system:

like... you're from that clan, but that...

that...

... that's a kind of omertà...

like you don't talk about it, but...

the mafia! that's exactly it, it's the mafia!

He laughs, his point only semi-serious - but one nevertheless worth pursuing. A note: by using the omertà code to think about silence and clan, I do not intend to suggest the practice of one is analogous to the practice of the other;²⁴ rather I use the system of omertà as a starting point from which to think about silence as a social code.

The association of silence with clan might be linked to its norms of lineage and descent. As a system of lineage and descent, clan is a social system into which one is literally born: clan therefore exists in the cultural and communicative practices of the everyday – a system that one practices, inhabits and performs and that does not need to be overtly communicated. In fact, as Ishmail argues, like omertà systems, an absence of overt communication is a key normative feature: one does not need to talk about clan because one lives clan; to talk overtly about clan would be to indicate one's lack of lived and (lineal) belonging. Rakopoulos's work on omertà systems in Sicily notes that in similar circumstances, silence should be understood not as an absence but as part of the communicative landscape, with its own grammar and systems of meaning (Rakopoulos, 2018). Commenting on his fieldwork, he notes, 'the practice of omertà was [...] a charged idiom that converted routine silence [...] into a normative domain' (Rakopoulos, 2018, p. 5). I would suggest that if participation in clan systems is

²⁴ Mafia is often linked to widespread violence and criminality, which is not the implication I wish to make for clan.

associated with silence, something similar could be argued here: ‘not talking about clan’ indicates that one sufficiently belongs in the community to not talk about clan. In these circumstances, silence is active and meaningful, and both performs and maintains ‘cultural intimacy’.

- **Between intimacy and communicative difference**

In Glasgow, the ‘cultural intimacy’ created by (some of the) non-iterative norms of clan retains some power because it enables and maintains a specifically Somali heritage of belonging. With its requirements for communicative and cultural competences, for some, clan remained a common and ‘safe’ space (Hill-Collins, 2002, p. 100) in which they can ‘inhabit’ (Ahmed, 2007) Somali cultures without pressures or intrusions from external forces. As an outsider to clan practices and with limited related competences, on several occasions in my fieldwork I found that silence was also used to maintain these practices as a ‘safe space’. For instance, at a meeting with a women’s group in which it was proposed they teach me about Somali culture, I wonder aloud if they will teach me about clan. Faduma responds,

Maya ma dooneyno in aan arrintan ka hadlno. Ma nihin noocaas oo kale. Dad aa u yar ayaan ku nahay Scotland, waxaan rabnaa inaan ka hadalno Somali guud ahaan, ma dooneyno inaan ka hadalno qabiil

No we don’t like to talk about it. We are not like that. We are very little in Scotland, we want to talk about Somalis not about clans.'

I move the conversation on. However, when I listen back to the audio with a translator, we hear further comments, made in Somali, which were not picked up at the

time. I cannot identify the voices but in the background of the conversation we hear one woman turn to her neighbour and comment,

'Clan exists'.

Her neighbour admonishes her with some concern,

'It's recording.'

Another woman comments through the chatter,

'We don't talk about clans.'

In our exchange, the women use both silence and language to assert clan's cultural boundaries. By not talking about clan – by mobilising silence – and by speaking Somali, they achieve two things: they are able to exclude me – a cultural outsider – from their 'culturally intimate' space, and by ensuring I cannot hear (or understand) any subsequent discussion about clan, they adhere to clan's communicative norms, thus reaffirming their ('culturally intimate') membership. However, as the exchange above suggests, communicative normativity and boundary maintenance were not the only textures of communicative 'silence' in our conversation. In her Helsinki ethnography, Bjork observes that clan is also maintained as a 'culturally intimate' act because it is seen as a potential 'source of external embarrassment' (Bjork, 2007, p. 137) due to its politicised potential, association with the Somali conflict and subsequent narrativisation as 'backward'. Faduma's initial reaction to the topic of clan – 'we are not like that' – suggests that this also informs the women's responses. Silence in this case may be an act of 'cultural intimacy', but it is also an act of protection, both of a 'safe space' from external intrusion, and of a cultural space from external judgement and inscription.²⁵

²⁵ As I discuss in later chapters, the maintenance of a 'safe' space was important to some of the older generation women, as it remained the only space in the Glasgow context in which they felt their dialogue was not moderated (see Parts 4.2 and 5.3).

However, whilst the women enact these different ‘silences’ to maintain boundaries and belonging according to clan norms, our exchange suggests they were also acted upon by codes of silence. Whilst there may be some embarrassment in Faduma’s response to me, I would suggest that in her answer and in the worries of her associates, there is also some anxiety attached to the category. As Ishmail’s comments in earlier sections of this chapter highlighted, clan remains a source of concern for many in Glasgow due to its politicised potential. In our exchange, there may have been some anxiety that publicly discussing clan could only lead to political disagreements. However, there may also have been some anxiety that the public discussion of clan was a transgression of its communicative norms. In this way, clan is revealed not only as a means of commun(e)icative expression, but as a means of ‘controlling and regulating’ (Foucault, 1991) its subjects. As Hussain’s experience below reveals, it does this through the unarticulated threat of exclusion from the community:

yeah it's difficult... I would feel uncomfortable [talking about clan] in front of a Somali now [...] because they would be like,

- *'that's not true, you are my brother, like, how would you do this?'*

Yes, we are brothers... but if there's a war in Glasgow tomorrow, you're not going to save me you'll save the person... there's that kind of mentality

Just as silence in omertà systems is associated with an honour-code, silence in clan politics is associated with value-judgements on one’s commitment to the fraternity (Pitrè, 2007, pp. 292-4; cited in, Rakopoulos, 2018, p. 4). Hussain acknowledges that his perceived violation of the omertà code would be seen as a betrayal of this fraternity, and that his belonging to the community would be questioned. He also notes that this threat of exclusion makes him feel ‘uncomfortable’ and is designed to make him ‘self-

regulate' his actions (Foucault, 1991) - to moderate his speech or stop talking about clan altogether.

The women's maintenance of silence about the topic of clan can therefore be understood as complex and multi-layered. Though their performance of silence creates boundaries and belonging in Glasgow, as a normative category of clan it also imposes itself upon their actions. The threat of exclusion if its norms are not adhered to is doubly worrying for the women, firstly because exclusions lead to divisions in the community, and could spark the politicised realisation of clan that they fear (and articulated by Hussain above), and secondly, as Faduma's observation that 'we are very small in Scotland' suggests, because divisions in the community are undesirable in the geographically and culturally isolated Glasgow environment (see Part 3.2 and Part 5). As a result, they are caught in a difficult situation, as maintaining silence in the hope of sustained 'cultural intimacy' might simply allow clan norms to 'control and regulate' their activities: silence becomes silencing. As a result, clan and its communicative norms created a rather uncomfortable 'intimacy' for the majority of people in Glasgow. Based on his experiences, Hussain sought to clarify its role:

if you understand the mafia,
you understand clan, the way clan works, because ...

... it's there...

..but it's not there.

Clan can do good for the community,
but it's **not** the community

If non-iterative performances of clan marked the potential for community divisions at the same time as they enacted instances of 'cultural intimacy', iterative (and specifically linguistic) performances also elicited some specific commun(e)icative tensions. Whilst

linguistic and cultural competences in 'clan practices' bounded and maintained some sense of Somali-orientated cohesion, they also highlighted key differences between groups within the population. Earlier in this chapter, I recalled a conversation with Faarax, in which he argued that because clan in Glasgow is not spatialised, linguistic practice is one of the only ways in which it can be realised. However, he observes,

the linguistic element?

the older generation, like my mum, would understand that

But I wouldn't get it

Ifrah, a decade younger than Faraax, also notes a similar dynamic in the sections above. Often in Glasgow, the linguistic and cultural competences associated with clan divided along generational lines, so that linguistic knowledge of clan was usually associated with older generations of the population. Though people from younger generations were multilingual, they sometimes had difficulties with the linguistic 'tells' of clan because they did not have the cultural or placed experience required to become 'fluent' in its practice. Where, for their parents, the linguistics of clan might have provided a communicative 'intimacy', for the group of young men and women it offered a degree of communicative exclusion. The consequences of these communicative differences for the community in Glasgow were received differently by the respective generations. Like older generations in Somali communities in other parts of the UK, some of the older Glasgow-based generation saw the younger generations' linguistic practices as a loss of clan's communicative culture (Liberatore, 2013, p. 77). Aweys, a man in his fifties, who had been in Glasgow since the early 2000s, speaks of the linguistic practices of the younger generations with regret:

*Hadii lagu hadli waayo caruurta kuwa ingiriiska ku
dhashay ama scotland afsoomaaligu waa ka lumay
u sheeg. Soomaali kuma hadlaan waa jejebiyaan.*

Our children who were born here, in Scotland
or England, don't speak Somali properly.
Their Somali is broken as they speak mainly in
English.

Dhibaato weeye generation.

It's a problem between generations.

For Aweys, the loss of linguistic specialism in the younger generation amounted to a loss of communicative 'intimacy' between the two generations. He notes that because the younger generation have grown up outside Somalia, they have not had the lived experiences that inform their linguistic heritage. As a result, Aweys argued, long-held Somali norms of clan and community are being 'lost' in the younger generations.

The young men and women to whom I spoke also acknowledged a change in their approach to clan, though they did not necessarily see it as a 'loss'. Instead, they argued, their different linguistic abilities provided some necessary distance from clan politics. At the same time, their multilingual abilities gave them new and alternative roles in the community. Duniya comments,

because our parents had stable jobs back home [but] they can't really do anything here, like the hire jobs and stuff, [so] actually more pressure is on the youth to make... to make a living and basically be someone - that's what they say.

Whilst many of the younger generation had had access to the UK education, their parents had not. As a result, many of the younger generation in Glasgow had had

access to educational opportunities to which their parents had not and subsequently had better prospects for employment and development. For the group of young men and women, this overturned generational norms of clan, as emphasis was now upon them rather than their parents to achieve and provide for their families.

For the younger generations, the combination of the linguistic gap and subversion of generational norms therefore provided sufficient distance from, and difference to, 'traditional' clan practices to prompt a reassessment of their norms. Omar, the thirty-year old community group leader explains,

we, [the group of young people], we have challenged the [traditional system], *you know*,

we told them,
- this is not the way our community changes,
you need to see some different faces, *you know*,
it's not just about *tribe*,
or, *you know*, [a bravado attitude of] 'I can do this'...
if you can do it, show it

Omar argues that the new responsibilities placed on the younger generation in Glasgow necessarily prompted a reimagining of community structures beyond clan hierarchy. His different experiences of community in Glasgow led him to advocate for a merit-based system of representation, based on contribution and citizenship. He acknowledged that this proposed a change not only for normative community structures, but also for the way in which communicative systems in the structure worked. He argued that in the Glasgow context, this was a change that was necessary for the community to fulfil its potential.

However, Omar notes, if the younger generations saw these changes as necessary and environmentally appropriate, others saw it as an act of disruption, of

unnecessary challenge and disunity. Though Omar's viewpoint was popular among many of the young people with whom I spoke, it had reached an impasse amongst the population in Glasgow. Whilst the older generation feared that alternative realisations of commun(e)ity would mean that traditional cultural and communicative practices would be lost, the younger generation feared that without alternative communicative practices, they would remain voiceless in all of the commun(e)ities of which they were part in Glasgow. 'So, um...', Omar hesitates, 'still no [change] yet. 'But', he comments with some optimism, 'I think it will be heading towards that direction'.

4.1.5 Clan, Voice and the Glasgow Effect

In the context of Glasgow City, Somali clan norms are done differently. In marked contrast with other sites of Somali settlement in the UK, the lack of political clan infrastructure has enabled a different dynamic to develop, which has emphasised a degree of 'cultural intimacy' and a sense of community based on knowledge of a shared culture. However, whilst this has provided a common point of reference, it has also prompted divisions within the population, often as a result of tension between established and emerging communicative practices of clan. As a result, though clan in the city remains something with which Somali people are familiar, it also remains a category towards which many are reluctant for community – and especially community representation – to be orientated.

Many of the cultural and normative changes and challenges arising from the subject of clan in Glasgow are comparable with situations elsewhere in the UK and Europe, including linguistic and generational differences within the population, generational challenges to the premise of clan and 'voice', and continued anxieties and silences over the violent potential of clan politics. However, whilst these changes and

challenges are thematically similar, they are also strongly influenced by, the result of and are specific to the context of the population in Glasgow itself. The relative geographic and cultural isolation²⁶ of the population in Glasgow to other Somali populations in the UK has emphasised the importance of community belonging and discouraged people from seeking overt means of difference or separation from the community, even as the same conditions have convinced some young men and women for the need for commun(e)icative change. In the meantime, the population has neither the practical means, nor the resources, nor the time to establish a comprehensive clan-orientated infrastructure. Poverty among the Glasgow population remains acute (Sosenko et al., 2013), and those involved with Somali community organisations emphasised neighbourly support rather than clan-interests as their priorities.

In marked contrast to other Somali populations in the UK and Europe, clan politics are not overt in Glasgow. As a result, the communicative hierarchy resulting from clan (which gives precedence to ‘majority’ clans over ‘minority’ clans) is also neither spatialised nor institutionalised. Many in Glasgow saw the different clan-orientated dynamic as an opportunity to think about how clan could (not) be done in the city. Without concretised clan infrastructure, institutions or Glasgow-based historical conflict, and with an emphasis on belonging and support, many shared Hussain’s opinion that there was potential ‘to gain the upper hand on this issue’. However, many also shared his opinion that this was unlikely to happen without support from the many other communities with which Somali people interact in Glasgow.²⁷

²⁶ Including, as I discuss in Part 5, anti-Muslim attitudes, racism and whiteness.

²⁷ See Part 5.1 for a continuation of this issue.

4.2 Somali Women's Voices in Glasgow: Towards Context and Plurality

In the very latter stages of my fieldwork, I attended a book launch with Khadija, a young woman in her twenties, whom I had known for some time. The event was a rarity in Scotland for both of us: the book that was to be launched discusses Somali people, and (even rarer!) had a focus on Somali women. The event held an interesting discussion about 'securitised' (Gilroy, 2002, Rashid, 2013) Britain and its impact on Somali women; however, by the end of the launch, Khadija felt she needs to raise some points. Based on research in London, the book, she observed, did not reflect her experiences in Glasgow; in addition, she suggests, with a focus on women's piety practices and Islamic revivalism, nor did the book reflect her own approach to being Somali, a woman and Muslim. Discussing the topic a few days later, her comments led us away from the book and to a discussion about the relationship between being Somali, being a woman and 'having voice'. Khadija commented half-joking, half-serious, that she was weary and wary of how Somali women's experiences of 'being Somali' were often spoken of in terms that failed to contextualise the complexities of their vocal experiences. Though, she noted, there were some conservative approaches to gender that remained dominant in internal Somali community infrastructures, their dominance did not reflect the plural approaches to gender and 'voice' that existed within a community. Rather, people's social backgrounds, politics, approaches to faith and personal values all contributed to how they conceived of the relationship between gender and 'voice'. Representations that suggested otherwise, Khadija suggested, were likely to obscure and erasure the vocal activities of Somali people – and especially Somali women. I begin this chapter with her comments in mind.

4.2.1 The Somali community and gender

Categorisations of gender retain influence over how Somali social institutions are organised. Traditionally giving precedence to paternal descent and male lineage, Somali social norms have established a gendered hierarchy according to which gender best ‘inhabits’ them (Affi, 2004, p. 93). As this system frequently concretises the relationship between gender and sex, women are ‘imagined’ as the lesser fulfilment of this traditional Somali norm (Mire, 2016, Affi, 2004, Choi-Ahmed, 1995). Affi argues that a normative approach to communicative activity can be summarised through the proverb '*ragna waa shaah, durmana waa sheeko*' / '*men drink tea while women gossip*' - which, she suggests, condenses and tells 'one of the principal narratives that organise gender relations, and therefore the ultimate subordination of women-folk' (Affi, 2004, p. 92). Here, she explains, 'drinking tea [...] is understood as a masculine activity and denotes hardiness, rationality and pragmatic thinking. Gossiping, on the other hand, is culturally interpreted as softness, emotionality and lack of pragmatic thinking' (Affi, 2004, p. 92). This gendering of public and political ‘voice’ may mean that in practice and in conservative contexts, women are not seen to ‘fit’ (Ahmed, 2007) public or political roles or positions of leadership. Placed lower in the communicative and normative hierarchy, women's voices are at risk of being under- or misrepresented. With these norms in place, women therefore have very different communicative experiences to men, which need specific consideration.

However, representations of Somali women that see them only as subjects of, and subject to, a paternal norm misrepresent their voices in a different way. As numerous scholars note, Somali women have a long-established precedent for maternal networks (Jama, 2010, Thomson, 2013, Al-Sharmani, 2006), activism (Jama, 1991,

Aidid, 2015b), alternative associations and activities not orientated towards these normative systems. Indeed, Affi argues that portrayals that frame the relationship between Somali women and clan only in this context are likely to follow a 'colonial[ist], oriental[ist] and androcentric' logic (Affi, 2004, p. 93) that constructs women as objects of both Somali and colonial paternalism, marks them as 'exotic Other' on racialised, faith-based and gendered grounds (Brah, 2005), and subjects them to intersecting (Crenshaw, 1991) misogynies. Similar patterns of (mis)representation might be observed in a UK context, in which Somali women are the subjects of multiple discourses that represent them as silent and silenced (Rashid, 2013, Mahmood, 2011, Spivak, [1985] 2010; see Parts 5.2 and 5.3 for further discussion). Choi-Ahmed argues that Somali women's experiences can only be fully represented if the effects of both Somali paternal norms and patriarchal, colonial norms are considered together (Choi-Ahmed, 1995). Like Khadija above, she emphasises a concern for history, environment, people and place.

In post-migration settings, these concerns are made further complex. Shifting gender dynamics amongst Somali people in the West have frequently been framed in terms of a 'crisis of masculinity' (Kleist, 2010, p. 185), in which the loss of professional and social status by some Somali men, alongside the involvement of the welfare state in families' lives, has become incompatible with norms of masculinity (Kleist, 2010, p. 188; 201). Whilst consideration of this crisis is undoubtedly needed, it is also problematic: its framing as a male 'loss', and a concurrent female 'gain', leaves the Somali paternal norm unquestioned (Kleist, 2010) and presents Somali women only as in need of saving (and as of having been 'saved' by the West). It is worth noting here that whilst uneven gender norms continue to dominate Somali social structures, there are multiple interpretations of the extent to which they must be adhered. As I discuss

below, many women with liberal values would be appalled at the suggestion their gender was 'saved' by contact with the West; many others with more conservative values would see no premise for which 'saving' was required. Others may occupy a middle ground between these approaches. Gail Hopkins argues that for Somali women in contemporary Europe, their experiences, places in society and voices rests on how they negotiate and situate their performances of gender, so that it is a case of 'learning *how* to be a Somali woman in those locations at a particular moment in time' (Hopkins, 2006, p. 525). In the meantime, Liberatore argues for consideration to be given to the role of faith in the (re)imagining of Somali gender roles (Liberatore, 2013, pp. 80-89).

This scholarship provides a starting point from which to contextualise Somali women's experiences of 'voice' in Glasgow; however - just as in Part 4.1 - their conclusions do not necessarily directly transpose into the Glasgow context. The majority of studies above are built upon work with women in London (Liberatore, Hopkins), Canada (Hopkins) and Copenhagen (Kleist), all of which have large and historic populations with specific population demographics, kin affiliations and migration contexts. To what extent do women's experiences in Glasgow differ? To what extent do the different demographics and backgrounds of women in Glasgow impact their experiences? In both the scholarship above and in previous chapters (Parts 3.1, 3.2 and 4.1), an idea of community and belonging has run in parallel to people's experiences of (not) 'having voice': does this remain the case for Somali women in Glasgow? I try to unpack these questions in the following sections.

4.2.2 The normative gendering of 'voice' in Glasgow

As I will discuss throughout the next sections, women's experiences of (not) 'having voice' in Glasgow were plural, contextually influenced and by no means homogenous.

However, though they experienced and reacted to them differently, there was a consensus that there were some dominant gendered norms within the community that remained generally conservative. '...It's quite traditional, yeah', Warsan observed. In one of our group discussions, the elder women considered the dynamic in more detail. Saafia explains,

*Ragga iyaga ayaa ku haboon, raga aqoon beey u
leeyihiin sida dowladda loola xaqjoodo. Inkastoo,
haweenka aay ku cusub yihiin waddankan oo aay
haadda jaamacadaha dhigtaan, goortee dhameeyaan,
haa, waxaan uga baahanahay gacan.*

Men are in control...

men are knowledgeable and are able to deal with
the government.

Although women are new in this country, [they] are now at the University,
...when they graduate...
yes, we need support.

Saafia explains that following dominant gender norms, in Glasgow men are associated with the public representation of the community, as they have knowledge and experience of 'politics'. She highlights the current social inequality between (some) Somali men and women, in which greater access to education in Somalia has allowed men more access to systems of public representation. However, Saafia does not necessarily agree that this should be or should remain the status quo; rather, she looks to the day when she anticipates that women have a similar level of knowledge to do the same. In the meantime, she suggests, women in Glasgow are in need of this male-led support. It is worth noting here that though Saafia accepts the current dominant gender norm in Glasgow, it is not because she accepts that public Somali 'voice' has a 'fixed'

gender. Rather, though she notes that in Glasgow 'men are in control', she does not think that this is *because* they are men (or because leadership is a 'masculine' attribute). Rather, she sees the men's power as related to their knowledge - they are already sufficiently knowledgeable enough to 'deal with the government'. She anticipates a time when women have gained sufficient knowledge to be able to perform the same leadership role.

Saafia's comments are made based on her own experience and perspective. In her fifties, she lived the majority of her life in Somalia before arriving in Glasgow in the 2000s. With a child to care for on her own, she has been able to access some education in Glasgow, but her access has been limited (discussed further below), and alongside some of her peers, she felt unqualified to intervene in public, community matters. At a social event, a similar discussion occurs and a similar point is made. Ishmail, who was part of the conversation, later comments to me,

... but as I was listening, I was like, ok, I don't remember this type of experience, but yet you're speaking on my [community's] behalf [...] and then she was like, we don't have many people who go to University, and we do, we have so many people, like girls who did really well for themselves, but they're not aware, or they don't want to acknowledge that

Responding to the comments, Ishmail noted the difficulties in representing Somali women in Glasgow. Though Saafia's comments were based on her own experiences, he argued, her experience could not 'speak for' all women in Glasgow, and could be taken as implying that all Somali women in Glasgow were 'voiceless'. Ishmail instead referred to his two (female) cousins, both of whom had attended university in Scotland, and who, he suggested, were more than qualified to negotiate dominant gender norms for themselves.

When I spoke later to Khadija (one of Ishmail's cousins), she agreed with his assessment, but noted that though she and her sister had ways of negotiating the more conservative gender roles (discussed below), this did not mean that they were entirely unaffected by them. She notes to me that the normative dynamic is part of everyday community life:

gendered roles and hierarchies...

they become norms, because they happened since you were born

Though, she argues, these norms do not define her activities, they nevertheless remain influential in some parts of the community. For instance, she remembers,

and I have had some comments when I was at university, that struck me in the past,

like,

oh, what is the point of you working so hard at university?

you'll end up in the kitchen

....that kind of reaction

The objections Khadija had to her attendance at university attempt to re-place her into a fixed gender binary in which women are associated with domesticity. As a result of her gender, and because of the way in which 'voice' is gendered, she is expected to speak only in the limited terms of the norm, and in the domestic environment that it demands. Though Khadija continues not to ascribe to these social and communicative conditions, she nonetheless concedes that they remain in the background of her experiences.

For other young women in Glasgow, they had a more active impact on their community and communicative experiences. As my conversation with the group of young men and women progressed, I asked them to tell me a little more of their

experiences of 'voice' in Glasgow. At the time of the conversation, I thought the whole group had agreed that they generally 'had a voice' in Glasgow; however - and in a similar situation to Part 4.1 -I was only able to hear Mariyam's stage-whispered comments when I listened back to the audio. Her observations bring a different dynamic to the conversation. I say,

- so... do you think you have a voice in Glasgow?

And I get the following responses:

Mariyam: *[whispers]* no

Cabdi: yes

Abdul: yes

Suleiman: yes

Me: *[not hearing Mariyam's comments and addressing the group]* and what do you mean, with your family, with your friends?

Mariyam: *[laughs with some resignation/frustration at the irony of my not having heard her]*

Suleiman: yeah I mean in general, I'm respected

Mariyam: *[whispers]* I'm not respected... in the community

Suleiman: at school? general respect

Mariyam: *[whispers]* in the community, no one will listen to you... not all of them

A decade younger than Khadija, and with a different social circle, Mariyam suggests that she has difficulty finding someone to listen to her in 'the community'. In her whispers, she speaks of her own experiences and does not explicitly link her observations to being a Somali woman; however, the dynamic in which her comments play out provide a context that emphasise gendered differences. In the conversation, whilst Suleiman has sufficient confidence to express his opinions, Mariyam judges it best to deliver hers in stage-whispers; whilst Suleiman does not doubt that his voice 'fits'

in the public group setting, Mariyam is wary that her voice may not 'fit', especially if it expresses dissent. Though there are other dynamics in the conversation that may also cause her to moderate her speech (for instance, the presence of an older group leader, the presence of an unknown white woman (me)), both Mariyam's vocal performance, and her experience of community 'voicelessness' run parallel to the communicative expectations set by conservative gendered norms. According to these and related social norms (see Part 4.1), her status as a young Somali women find her at the intersections of gendered and generational communicative hierarchies.

In the conversation above, Mariyam moderates her speech in reaction to the dynamics of the group and a wariness of being seen to be acting outside the norm. In Part 4.1, Hussain argued that lineage-orientated social norms sought to 'control and regulate' his speech, and later in the chapter, I explored how the isolation of Glasgow at times emphasised community belonging. In Mariyam's vocal reaction to the public setting of the group, I would suggest something similar occurs but this time it is orientated specifically towards gender norms, and the performances both of 'confident' masculinity and 'deferent' femininity.²⁸ Warsan too agreed that gender norms in Glasgow were in part regulated by the condition of (un)belonging to a small population:

people talk a lot and it is not a massive community
and that is where the main issues are...

...if a woman is seen acting inconsistently,
like,
daytime she's like this and night-time she's like that,
...that's where the gossip starts

Warsan's observation that gender norms are maintained through 'gossip' highlights

²⁸ Because, of course, gender norms act upon men and ideas of masculinity and belonging too.

again the relationship between community and communication (see Part 3.2). However, where (in Part 4.1) clan systems attempted to maintain their silent norm through omertà-style regulation, conservative gender systems relied upon vocalised activity to help regulate gender norms in the community. In the way that breaking a 'silence' about clan 'marked' one as outside its norm, one's appearance in community 'gossip' similarly found one outside the gendered norm. If one operated outside a fixed, gendered norm, one's activities became 'remarkable' (Ahmed, 2007) and of public interest, itself a status outside the political/domestic normative binary, and also in need of 'regulation'. For women, the condition of acting outside the gender norm was gossip about one's moral character and the threat of a loss of status, or even a loss of belonging in the community, and further barriers to 'voice'.²⁹ For some, the Glasgow setting made this additionally pressurised.

4.2.3 Plural voices

Though conservative gender dynamics remained normative, as the comments by the women above suggest, the regulative activity of community gender norms were experienced to different extents at different times. In this section, I explore three different approaches to 'voice', gender and community in Glasgow.

- **Doing gender differently**

For some women with whom I spoke, the terms with which dominant gender norms sought to condition their belonging in 'the community' were not terms that they recognised as part of their everyday lives. Alongside others with whom I spoke, Warsan observed that her family put different emphases on norms of belonging. In

²⁹ These regulations too cannot be separated from clan norms, which primarily emphasise *paternal* belonging.

Somalia, she explained, her mother and grandmother came from urban environments, and her mother had been through the Somali education system and was highly qualified. As a result, she, her sisters and her brothers were taught that their roles were primarily about good citizenship and self-sufficiency, a focus articulated in terms of,

You need to get educated... be able to support yourself and be productive

The theme of education recurs throughout this chapter and is mobilised differently by various women. However, in Warsan's case, it is not only the vehicle with which she can achieve self-sufficient, informed citizenship, but also the means with which she operates outwith conservative gendered norms. For her and her family, Warsan explains, citizenship is informed by a series of belief-systems and values – including 'being' Somali, and the practice of Islam – that focuses on ethically-orientated belonging with a conscious emphasis on gender equity. These norms and values, not the dominant gender norms above, inform her family's everyday lives. Through a normative lens, Warsan suggests, her mum's way of doing things challenges a traditional idea of gender fixity, because her actions could be interpreted as 'masculine'; however, she notes, and using her sister as an example, one can 'do one's gender' differently... differently (Butler, 2011)!

yeah, my mum is quite different from many... the stereotype of Somali women ...
she's very open minded and doesn't mind what people think, [...]
she's quite...

she's quite masculine in a way! Sometimes I'm like how did you have me, actually!

... but then on the other side I have my sister ...
she's quite feminine, she's very much laid back...
they influence us in different ways.

Warsan suggested that because her family approached ideas about both community citizenship and gender from a perspective outwith the dominant gender norm, their activities were less orientated towards gendered norms that might otherwise restrict them. She notes that whilst she has encountered some adverse reactions from other in the community, on the whole, and despite its differences, her family's approach is accepted. She explains,

I dress quite Western and that comes with stigma all the way of not being...
but my mum's very well-known and well-respected so they don't... they try
and accommodate you

Warsan notes that whilst the way in which she dresses may 'stand-out' from conservative gender expectations, the community recognises that her family's alternative way of being 'citizens' is also of value. In this instance, Warsan suggests, her family's alternative citizenships and her mother's 'masculine' activities deflects censorship and allows her to speak largely in her own terms.

Where Warsan's family's approach allowed them to maintain a link to 'the community' whilst framing their 'voices' in their own terms, others adopted a different approach to avoid regulative gender norms. Yusra, of a similar age and educational background to Warsan, instead adopted a policy of avoiding spaces where conservative gender norms might become dominant or influential. She comments,

I always think that if I wasn't in the UK and I was back in Africa I wouldn't
have a voice... ..I know that for a fact... ..
... and I think...
... especially for young women,
and to be active in the community and everything,
I wouldn't last

[She laughs to herself]
I really would not last.

Though, she notes, gender inequalities are not part of her everyday experiences in Glasgow, she does at times encounter these more conservative gendered norms:

I encounter some male Somalis who are like, 'no, you're a woman I'm not talking to you'... not to generalise, of course! ... but I can't see myself being friends with someone who didn't share my approach

In response, Yusra comments, she chooses her contacts and communicative spaces carefully. At times, she finds more use in acting entirely independently of 'the community' and, like Warsan and her family, mobilises alternative norms of 'voice'.

- **Negotiating voice, faith and community responsibilities**

Both Warsan and Yusra established their voices through alternative normative systems; however, where Warsan felt able to negotiate these norms in parallel with dominant community norms, Yusra felt that they needed to operate independently. However, Warsan's and Yusra's communicative experiences in Glasgow were by no means universal amongst Somali women in the city, and were notably different to that of many of their peers.

A group of women in their teenage-years and twenties recounted their experiences to me. Though they in part shared a similar approach to Warsan – that women should be educated, self-sufficient and have access to public roles – 'traditional' gendered community norms played a more direct part in their lives. The young women explain,

Amina: yeah, it's different for girls and boys... like girls, from [age] fourteen upwards, you're expected to be the housewife...kinda... ... not like

you're a housewife!.. but to act a certain way. But for brothers, I mean like for guys, it's like, they [the parents] want them to study a lot so...

Me: is that something you find difficult to negotiate?

Amina: for our parents it's easier because they were brought up in Somalia, and from there they [the girls] start from seven years old, and they do the house and do the stuff. But for us - it's like, we've got school and Islamic Studies to think about, so [domestic work] is not really a priority

Me: ok, do they get that?

Amina: I think they get that to a certain extent [...] it wouldn't be a problem if you have to study, cos obviously they know that you have to study to get to where they want you to be, basically! But then you gotta know what you gotta do, cos you're also a woman and you gotta know what you gotta do in the house

Amina explains that although both young men and women are expected to attain qualifications, this focus shifts in early teenage years. Whilst the young men encounter increased pressure to study, young women are expected to split their attention between study and domestic work. Amina sees the expectation as a result of her parents' experiences in Somalia (in which girls' domestic work took precedence early on) and does not necessarily agree that the practice has context in Glasgow. She notes that the dual requirements for young women both to study (in mainstream and Islamic school) and develop domestic, 'marriageable' skills can be difficult to negotiate. We continue:

Me: ok, so your role as women, you take that quite seriously?

Amina: maybe not as much as our parents did...like, I think we like to think that we do, but maybe not as serious as our parents would like us ...

Amina suggests that though she and her friends continue to respect their parents'

expectations, they are also mindful of the different context of, and requirements made of them in, Glasgow, and continue to prioritise their education. As she suggests, this can sometimes cause some friction between their peer-group and their parents, who at times do not think they are taking traditional gender norms seriously enough. The result, Amina explains, is often a negotiation and a compromise: accepting the concretised link between (female) gender and domestic responsibilities, whilst balancing these responsibilities with education in school and in Islam. The young women explain that getting the balance right can sometimes be difficult and can place them in uncertain positions when it comes to their places and roles in 'the community'. Mindful that they needed to consolidate their positions in both social spaces, the young women turned to an additional social space to negotiate their gender roles and adopted piety practices associated with Islam – modest dress, demure public demeanours and distance from overt public practice (Mahmood, 2011, p. 166). By outwardly adopting piety practices, the young women signalled to their parents their continued commitment to traditional gendered norms. However, these practices also allowed the women to continue to conduct educational exploration and alternative ways of 'doing' their gender. Based on her work with young women in London, Liberatore suggests that young Somali women's adoption of Islam allowed them to continue with their education, whilst also providing an ethically-orientated space in which they can critically consider Somali cultural norms and their requirements (Liberatore, 2013, p. 80). For the young women in Glasgow then, piety practices allowed a public performance of traditional gender roles, whilst allowing some space for negotiation and flexibility

- **Finding voice in gendered norms**

Whilst Amina and her peers attempted to negotiate a position between dominant gendered norms and more progressive roles, other women in the Somali population felt

comfortable operating within the traditional norms of the community. For some women, traditional gender norms provided roles to participate in and contribute to the community, whilst also allowing for the creation of maternally-led networks. I encountered this approach mostly amongst the group of elder women. Zeinab says,

in our country, we stayed at home, men used to go to work, some women used to work, but mainly women used to look after the children and look after everything in the house including their education

For Zeinab and her associates, their role within a traditional dynamic centred on motherhood and the management and development of children and the house. Zeinab explains that in Somalia, the role of raising the children and managing the domestic sphere was a gender-fixed imperative. A key responsibility of motherhood for those with daughters was ensuring their marriageability, and educating them in the domestic skills that would ensure they were both eligible and equipped to run their own house. In some contexts in Somalia, because of the emphasis on their role in the domestic sphere, it was unusual for young women to be sent to school (Aidid, 2010). In these contexts, the women explained, though young women therefore faced barriers to public roles, there were alternative spaces in which women could express themselves. Traditional gender norms, the women argued, put mothers in charge of their daughters' development and provided space for them to create women-led networks. Zeinab instructs the interpreter:

*U sheeg, inaan leenahay dhaqan caado u ah in ilmaha
shaqada guriga wax ka caawiyaan. [...] Ma fahantey?
Waxeey inagu caawiyaan adeegga. Tani waa nooca aan
annaga gabdhaheena u tarbiyeysano.*

Tell her, that we possess a culture that sees children helping in chores as normal. [...] Do you understand? They help with the shopping. This is our way of educating and training our daughters.

As Choi-Ahmed has observed (Choi-Ahmed, 1995), whilst the structural proliferation of gender dynamics in Somalia has resulted in social inequalities, there is also considerable scope for alternative realisations of the dynamics, especially in the context-based way women perform the roles themselves. Choi-Ahmed emphasises the importance of women's networks and the work women do outside the sphere of male hegemony. As such, although the domestic chores are orientated towards marriageability and paternal structures, the performance of the gender role itself rests within a maternal context, in which women have power as educators.³⁰

However, in Glasgow, different educational norms were putting some pressure on the women's way of doing things: whilst they support the academic and professional advancement of their daughters, the different gendered and generational dynamics that this precipitated presented challenges to their own modes of education, maternal and extra-paternal relationships. The women worried that as a result, they would not only lose their communicative role in the community, but that they would also lose their line of communication with their daughters (see also Berns McGowan; discussed further below). They emphasised the continued importance of maternal networks in the city, which they saw as providing alternative spaces to the potentially divisive, paternally-orientated politics of clan. Ilhan comments,

³⁰ It would be pertinent here to question the age at which girls begin chores and the extent to which they must perform, as whilst here I present their potential, I do not suggest that the enforced or constant performance of chores is supportable or conducive to maternal networks.

... women, they stick together, especially when they are moving to different cities. They don't care of what clans they are from, they live with each other.

4.2.4 Contextualising Somali women's voices in Glasgow

As the above testimonies demonstrate, in Glasgow conservative gender dynamics remain dominant in the way in which community is 'imagined', and can have influence over the extent to which women feel they 'have voice' in the city. However, whilst these norms remain in place, Somali women mobilise, challenge, avoid, adapt and adopt these categories in plural ways. In these approaches, community remains an important imaginary for the women, whether it is something against which they are reacting, a norm to be negotiated or a category towards which they orientate their activities.

In Glasgow, then, gender normativity was a category with layered and often contradictory pathways to 'voice', especially when Somali women's differing experiences, social statuses, generations and values are taken into account. However, just as in Part 4.1, community norms were further disrupted and acted upon by the Glasgow environment, the context of the city further complicated Somali women's experiences and performances of 'voice'. For instance, for the teenage women above, a focus on piety practices provided spaces in which they could fulfil their parent's gendered expectations of them whilst also exploring gendered options outside these norms. Whilst providing a space of exploration and negotiation, piety practices continued to signpost the young women's belonging to the community. Warsan comments that in Glasgow,

some places where a lot of people live in the same block,
some of the teenagers or young girls are much more traditional than in other areas
people start doing things because the community is doing things,

[as well as] Islam itself..
a ripple effect... it's the norm

[partly] you [consider] your parents,
cos your parents want to fit and be respected
...and [also] if you don't do it a certain way,
you feel marginalised or whatever

In Glasgow, Warsan observes, alongside their faith-based value, piety practices also have community value. Adopting these practices signalled belonging in the community on several levels: outward adherence to conservative gender norms, respect for one's parents' generation (and therefore generational norms), and a desire to remain part of the community. For some young women, Warsan observed, the conspicuous practice of Islam therefore became a method of community-making, and ensuring they would continue to be represented in and by 'the community'. She and others noted that, in their experiences, in comparison to London, there were more young women in Glasgow who outwardly adopted more traditionally gendered practices, and suggested that the Glaswegian context had an influence here. In the Glasgow context, where the Somali population's cultural and social distance from other Somali populations left the community relatively isolated, the consequences of 'not belonging' to the community were more acute than in London, where there were other options available. For the young women in Glasgow then, the conspicuous practice of piety had a plural role: as a space in which normative gender roles could privately be explored; as a space of 'ethical self-fashioning' (Liberatore, 2013); as an important part of being in 'the community'; and as a safety net against commun(e)icative exclusion in an already isolated environment.

4.2.5 community, gender and social background

The impact of the Glasgow environment how Somali women approached ideas of community and 'voice' also depended on their social backgrounds. Khadija comments:

so because we are in the community and there is a system...

for me its not because I went to uni and I have other students for friends...

but if you are Somali,

mid 40+

and you rely on your community

and you have limited languages

...then it is very important ...

...so you want to fit in

and you want to be accepted,

and you want to be a good person...

You don't wanna be

dropped.

Khadija notes that her own background means that she has a very different approach and experience of gendered roles in Glasgow as some other women. Khadija's family came from an urban background in Somalia, where liberal gender norms were dominant and expected. Though she had now lived half her life outside Somalia, she observed that these norms had influenced how she was brought up, especially in her mother's focus on education and gender equity. In contrast, she observed, women in Glasgow with rural Somali backgrounds were more likely to have lived in environments where conservative norms emphasised their domestic roles above public roles or their education (Aidid, 2010). With limited education in Somalia, and on arrival in Glasgow, she notes, women with these backgrounds were likely to experience significant barriers

to language-learning, education and employment, and be far more reliant on normative Somali-community systems for support.

The structural disadvantages of these types of backgrounds therefore had consequences for women's experiences of both internal and external community infrastructures. Zeinab comments,

*Aad ayaan ugu faraxsanahay waddankan. Abaal
ayaana u heynaa, weeyna mahadsan yihiin.*

Can you say thank you and we are grateful to the government?

They did many positive stuff for us.

However, she comments, though welfare provision had provided much needed support for her peers and their families, the involvement of the State in their lives was not without challenges. She continues,

But we also have difficulties.

What we are telling you is the truth

and are the difficulties we have encountered.

[For instance] We don't have the power to defend ourselves.

Agreeing, Saafia also comments,

*Waxeey na siiyaan (caawinaad), sababteey inoo
cawineyn, dowladda waxeey caawintaa kuwa
doonaya ineey horumar sameeyaan... Lakiin,
innaga markeenii horebaa nalaga tagey.*

They give us [the community] support, why wouldn't they?

But, we were left behind from the start.

Saafia makes the case that although many Somali people in Glasgow have benefitted from the support of the State, she and her peers have fallen through the gaps in provision 'from the start'. Though educational and employment opportunities were in theory available to the women, in practice, and due to the barriers to their education in Somalia, many of Saafia's peers struggled with the requirements that had to be met to gain such support (Akua-Sakiyiwah, 2012).³¹ With fragmented access to social support in Glasgow, they remained linguistically and culturally isolated in the city and turned inward to the traditional community structures with which they were familiar. Though the women were content enough to continue their belonging in the community according to its traditional gender roles, they felt that their decision to do so would lead to punishment by the State. The women gave me a number of examples in which their parenting techniques – with an emphasis on chores, discipline and gendered roles – had led to interventions by Social Services. Berns McGowan's Canadian/London ethnography recounts a similar situation. She explains:

The community has needed to adopt new patterns of parenting since moving to the West. Within Somalia, authority was traditionally assumed to flow from male to female and from elder to youth. Respect was expected to stream in the other direction. [...] Somalis, however, found themselves in exile in societies which have witnessed their own debates over child-raising over the past half-century [...]. Parents are expected to respect their children as much as children respect them

(Berns McGowan, 2004, p. 122)

³¹ Maintaining a job search, and job seekers' allowance requires claimants to attend a prescribed number of interviews, as well as attending timed sign-ons (Akua-Sakiyiwah 2012, 161). Interviews also require a level of English, which require ESOL attendance; but this in itself is often disrupted by the same job-seekers' duties - and by childcare responsibilities, such as school pick-ups and household responsibilities (Akua-Sakiyiwah 2012, p.161)

In our conversation, the women were horrified that the culturally-derived expectations they had of their children (such as chores) could draw the attentions of Social Services; and they despaired of understanding the logic that would prompt this to happen. I quote Zeinab at length to try and present her perspective on the situation (whilst not endorsing her parenting techniques):

marka aan ka hadleyno ilmaheena, waxeey yirahdaan, lama hadlaan oo waxba kama celiyaan, ma garaacaan, waxba uma sheegaan. Haddaba taasi waa dhaqankooda, ma aha keena. Annaga dhaqankeena, haddii ilmaha uu edeb darroodo, waa la garaacaa, si aan xoog aheen. Faraq weyn ayaa ku jira ilmaha iyo waalidkooda, waa ineey xushmad iyo kala dambeyn jirto, waa dhaqankeena. Hadduu ilmahaada ku ixtiraami waayo, waa inaad tusisaa ineey ilmahaada yihiin oo aay kaa dambeeyaan. Ilmaha yar waa inuu xushmeeyo midka ka weyn. Dhaqankeena waa in qofka weyn la xushmeeyo. Dhaqankeena, ilmaha waa xor. Iyadoo dhaqankeenu uu na barayo ineey ilmaheenu xor yihiin, haddana waxaan dooneynaa ineey ilmaha ogaadaan ineey waalidkooda xushmeeyaan. Waddankan, markeey ilmaha gaaraan 16 jir waa xor. Annaga xataa hadduu yahay 40 jir oo uu kula deggan yahay waa inuu ku xushmeeyaa. Soo arrintaasi run ma aha?

when we talk about our children, they [Social Services] say don't talk to them don't tell them off, don't [discipline] them, don't say anything to them. That's their culture not our culture. In our culture, if the child misbehaves you need to spank them - not aggressively! There is a significant gap between children and their parents. They have to respect each other, that's our custom. If your child does not respect you, you must show them that they are your children and that they must follow you. The younger child must respect the older ones. In our customs, they must respect each other according on who's older. In your culture, children are free. In our culture whilst our children are free, we also want them to respect their parents. Younger children must respect the older ones,

children must listen to their parents. In this country, once the child reaches sixteen years, they are free. For us even if he is 40 and lives with you must still respect you. Isn't that the case?

The systems of social organisation to which Zeinab's parenting techniques are tied are informed by social and cultural norms. Her emphasis on 'respect' can be linked to the wider paternal system that values and emphasises lineage (see Berns McGowan above and Part 4.1). From Zeinab's perspective, the performance and maintenance of such structures are part of a parent/child relationship and are a condition of 'good' parenting. To do otherwise is outside her frame of reference. Berns McGowan explains, 'for Somali parents to be questioned, as many have been, on the grounds of child-abuse, after enduring unendurable horror and hardship in their homeland and in the leaving of it, has seemed to many the ultimate insult' (Berns McGowan, 2004, p. 122).

The situation that the women describe appears to be the result of a complete breakdown in cultural communication between the parties involved. Culturally and linguistically isolated, the women had been unable to consolidate their parenting frames of reference with the frames of reference applied in Scotland. Crucially, they also appeared not to have encountered any opportunities for which they could discuss these difficulties with social services. Though, I learned, there were initiatives in which women could learn about the mechanisms of social services, or attend parenting-skills classes, I could not find any initiatives that might speak to the women's more fundamental concerns: these initiatives appeared to provide information about *how* to negotiate the system rather than *why*. Towards the end of our discussion, Saafia comments,

We have a problem with the police and the social. No one can talk to the social.

The phrase catches the groups attention and is repeated around the room,

no one can talk to the social

no one can talk to the social

no one can talk to the social

In the background, a woman comments,

I'm glad this is being recorded, we have a problem.

Without this dialogue between the women and the State, the women were both distrustful and fearful of any State-based institutions that might become involved in the care of their children. The women feared that the lack of dialogue had multiple implications for the Somali community and their specific roles within it. They feared that their children would no longer wish to identify with Somali culture. They worried that an external approach that portrayed their parenting culture as 'wrong' undermined both their communicative bonds with their children and their maternal communicative roles in the Somali community. They were anxious that without these maternal roles, they would struggle to find 'voice' in the Somali community. They worried that they would be viewed by external eyes as uncultured and unable to account for themselves. They worried that though their way of 'doing community' was therefore under pressure, the cultural differences that were the cause of the pressure remained irreconcilable. Zeinab comments,

All of our attention is reserved to the government and the children. We are suspicious, all our thoughts are on that area. You can be happy only when you are free. You are not free because you are scared of the government and you monitor your children. You are anxious of what children and the

government could do and this gives you a number of health related issues such as high blood pressure, stress, depression.

In Part 2.1, I discussed Mahmood's argument against an analysis of 'freedom' as a 'universal category of acts' (Mahmood, 2011, p. 9). Mahmood argued that the imposition of one teleology of 'freedom' upon another could only result in the occlusion of the latter's activities (Mahmood, 2011, p. 9). Zeinab's comments make a similar point: that State-based welfare provision and traditional Somali parenting roles are predicated on different cultural and social teleologies, and that the conditioned imposition of one upon the other curtails the other's freedoms. I do not advocate for the women's parenting techniques here; however, I think their case raises necessary points for consideration about the intricacies of culture, voice, power and voicelessness in the Glasgow context. The interaction here of different social and cultural norms results in further community-based and communicative isolation. Meanwhile, for the women, the lack of teleologically-aware communicative space in the city means that they experience voicelessness in multiple aspects of their lives.

4.2.6 Somali women, community and 'voice' in Glasgow

In Glasgow, Somali women came from a wealth of different backgrounds, experiences and cultures. As the above testimony shows, there are plural ways in which women in Glasgow 'do their gender' (Butler, 2011); there are also concurrently plural ways in which women understand 'voice' in terms of gender. Though conservative gender norms within the community continue to emphasise women's communicative roles as orientated towards the domestic, women found opportunities for 'voice' within, in negotiation with and in opposition to these normative spaces. Though women in the Somali population had their differences, different approaches and different values, there

was also a recognition of plurality as part of their lives in the city. After all, Warsan comments, some vocal gender norms ‘you would want to challenge... but there's a limit as well, because [though they might not work for me], for some people in my family, that's the way it worked.’

As the experiences above also show, background and environment remain important factors in women’s communicative activities, as these may present additional cultural and socioeconomic contexts that intersect (Crenshaw, 1991) with gendered vocal norms to cause further communicative barriers. As a result of the Glasgow context in which they were situated, the women above also often thought about their voices in terms of their relationship towards community. In albeit different ways, all connected their vocal activities with an ethics of citizenship, so that the point of ‘having voice’ was not simply to make themselves heard above others, but to contribute to the group to which they were part and be a ‘good’ citizen, Muslim and Somali woman.

4.3 Communicative UnBelonging and the Glasgow Bajuni Campaign

So far, Part 4 has considered how many of the norms of Somali community can be problematised in terms of their communicative complexities, inclusions and exclusions; however, it has done so whilst orientated towards the experiences of people who would be considered part of the ‘majority’ Somali population. This final section of Part 4 traces the experiences of a group of people who are outside the norms of majority Somali community: the Glasgow Bajuni campaigners. The Bajuni people are members of a non-lineal, minority Somali clan. As a result, they are placed outwith the dominant Somali norms of ethnicity, lineage and belonging. In the meantime, the Bajuni people with whom I worked were refused asylum-seekers who were campaigning against their treatment by the Home Office. In this sense, they were also living in very different conditions of citizenship to others with whom I worked. The campaigners’ minority status and refused, near-destitute circumstances therefore placed them in almost entirely separate positions from the majority community. In this context, their experiences give some alternative perspectives on Somali community in Glasgow to those already discussed. In both cases, their minority status and their immigration status mark the limits of dominant ideas about community and citizenship. Their experiences speak of what it means to inhabit spaces outwith these limits in Scotland.

4.3.1 The Glasgow Bajuni Campaign

November 17th, 2013

Posted in: Wordpress: Uncategorised

Contributor: Bajuni campaigner

[Today] I met one of our campaign’s member [...] with angry look in his face, and this is what he said to me...

Brother, I’m so stressed and tired with Home Office letters, these horrible people

now they sent me a letter asking me to go to Somalis Embassy in countries like Italy, German, Belgium and Netherlands and ask them to prove that I am from Somalia. [...]

What are these people's thinking...?, How would I be able to go to those countries while I only have £35 a week in my stupid Azure card..? and even if I go there who will help me about this...? They know exactly that the whole office will be full with Somalis from mainland, no single person from Bajuni tribe. Just because they know that Somalis from mainland do not accept us as people from Somali that's why Home Office doing this to us, treating us like animals in the streets without their owners. You know what... I'm so tired with this kind of life... We are human too just like them, so why they doing this to us.. We didn't ask God to make us Bajunis, but we are happy that we are Bajunis, even if we're from minority tribe and small in number but all we ask is to be recognised the way we are and where we are from.

Then I told him not to worry too much because we're in this together, the important thing is not to give up on this and not to give them a chance to take us down, and promise him to fight together till the end, and I said this to him...

Kila lenye mwanzo halikosi kuwa na mwisho (surely everything which has the beginning, has it's end)

(Bajuni Campaign, 2014)

The Glasgow Bajuni campaign began in the autumn of 2013. Formed as a last resort for its appeal-rights-exhausted (Right to Remain, 2017) members, it sought to raise awareness of the difficulties a small group of Bajuni people were encountering with their asylum applications to the UK. The campaign was made up of six members: five men, aged between 19 and 30, and one woman. The campaign members had been Dispersed to Glasgow in the mid-2000s from different locations in England. After initial applications to the Home Office, and a protracted cycle of appeals and refusals, the group had been individually denied asylum and had been living off minimal government support for some time. The longest-serving Glasgow resident, Faaruq, had

been living in the city for seven years whilst his case hung over him. Mohamed was 19 and had arrived in Glasgow some years earlier without friends or family. Maalik was married and faced the threat of being separated from his wife and children if his case remained unsuccessful. Though Nadifa had relatives in Glasgow, she had been asked to leave her family home due to the ongoing stresses of her case, and was wholly reliant on the support of community volunteers. The ongoing uncertainty and pressures of their applications had taken its toll on the campaigners' physical and mental health, and excluded them from roles of everyday citizenship in Glasgow. With their cases unresolved, and with the ever-present threats of destitution, indefinite immigration detention, or deportation (Schuster, 2005) looming over them, the group decided to launch their campaign to highlight the inadequate provision the UK immigration application system had made for them. Amongst other actions, the campaign decided to begin a blog to record their experiences, which ended up being populated in the large by the youngest member, Mohamed. His entry above narrates the constant precariousness of the campaigners' lives in Glasgow, and begins to provide in some context to their cases. As members of a non-lineal, 'minority' Somali clan, and as appeal-rights-exhausted asylum seekers, the Glasgow Bajuni campaigners were subject to layers of exclusions and marginalisations. However, though the Bajuni campaigners had little say in any of the contexts of their exclusion, this did not mean that they were unable to 'speak' (Spivak, [1985] 2010). The remainder of Part 4.3 traces the conditions of the Bajuni campaigners' commun(e)icative exclusions and discusses their responses to these conditions.

4.3.2 Who are the Bajuni people?

The Bajuni people are a minority clan from the southern regions of Somalia. As a result of the ongoing conflict in Somalia, over the last three decades, Bajuni people have been displaced all over the world (Besteman, 2012). Those remaining in Somalia live on the coast of the Jubba Hoose region, in the Bajuni-founded port city of Kismayo and on the Bajuni Islands archipelago (see *Figure 4.1* below). Bajuni people have traditionally orientated their lives around the sea, either through fishing, trade or seamanship, or by cultivating land on the coast of mainland (Nurse, 2013, pp. 2-3). The Bajuni people have traditionally practiced Islam. Though Kibajuni, a Swahili dialect, is the first language amongst Bajuni people, the Bajuni also speak Swahili and some Somali (Nurse, 2013, p. 15). In more recent years, since displacement and trade have caused the Bajuni to travel further afield, Swahili has started to feature more heavily in the Kibajuni dialect (Allen, 2008). The Bajuni's Kibajuni linguistic heritage (Nurse, 2013, p. 37) associates them today with Bantu (Besteman, 2012) ethnicity, rather than lineal Somali ethnicity.³² In the meantime, thought to have African, Arab and Portuguese origins, the Bajuni people are not associated with the Somali lineage system (Nurse, 2013, p. 23).

As I will discuss below, the Bajuni people's minority status has resulted in a history of persecution and enslavement. However, whilst their origins, lifestyles and languages mark a point of difference from dominant Somali society, it is their narrativisation in broader Somali 'imaginings', rather than the simple fact of their difference, that has contributed to their persecution, as I discuss below.

³² The 'Bantu' labelling of people of the Shabelle and Jubba regions is a relatively recent development. The 'Somali Bantu' category identity was collectively adopted after the violence of the 1991 civil war to describe the collective suffering of non-lineal Somalis at the hands of majority clans (Besteman 2012). The broader 'Bantu' identity is used to describe people across sub-Saharan Africa, extending from Nigeria to the southern coast of Somalia, and south to South Africa. The term does not refer to ethnicity; rather, it is used to describe shared linguistic roots across diverse ethnic groups.

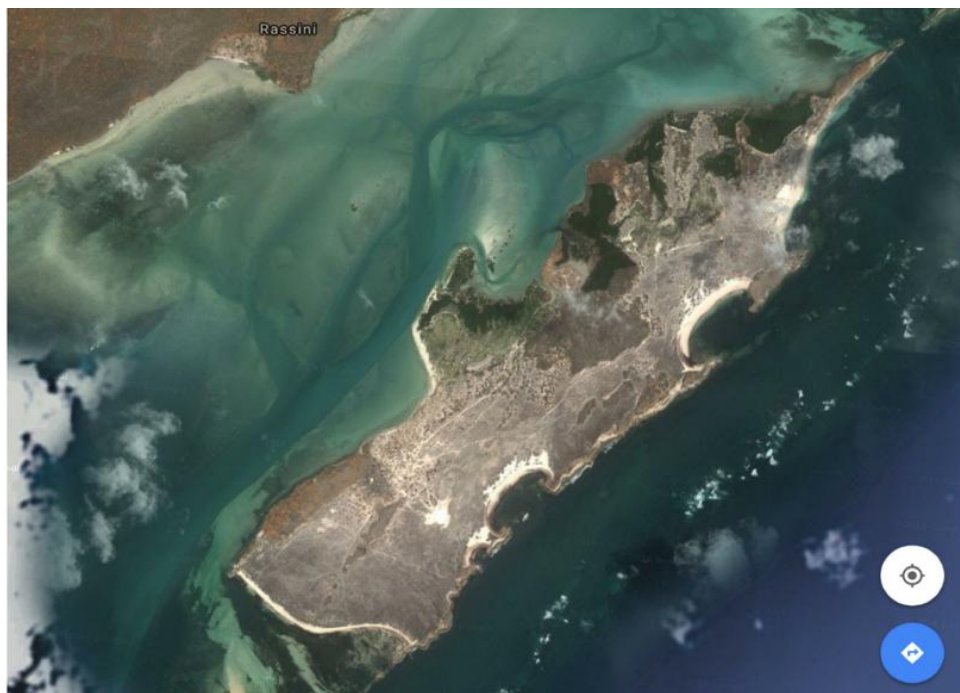
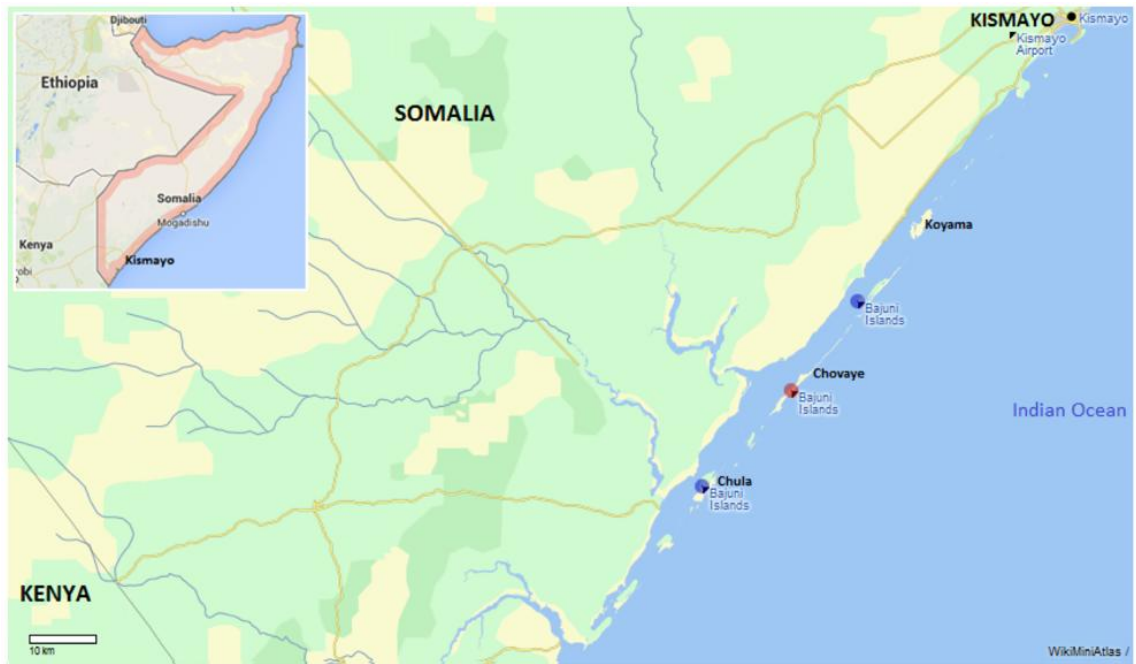


Figure 4.1: The Bajuni Islands

From top: (a) Map adapted from Wikitemplate; (b) Google Earth Satellite Image of Chula; (c) Image of a Bajuni beach, traditional hut and boat, taken from the campaign's Facebook page

4.3.3 Narratives of (un)belonging and the Bajuni people

In normative Somali social structures, the Bajuni people are narrativised as a ‘minority’ group. Kusow argues that narratives about non-lineal, minority Somali groups often places them in opposition to the majority Somali norms of ethnicity, lineage, lifestyle and faith (Kusow, 2004). This is certainly the case for the Bajuni people, who, narrativised as without descent from the common, male, Arab, Muslim ancestor of the majority lineages (Mire, 2015b, Mire, 2015c), are understood as ‘not really Somali’. On their blog, the campaigners describe their experiences,

Our tribe (The Bajuni Tribe) is a minority in Southern Somalia. Most Bajunis live in Kismayo and on the Islands off the south coast, which is where we are from. We speak Kibajuni which is a dialect of Swahili. We are often referred to as Tiku (which means slaves) by majority tribes and we are not treated well. Poor treatment has been getting worse since the 1990s and many Bajunis lived in Kenyan refugee camps following attacks from the larger tribes in Somalia. As attacks on Bajuni homes, beatings, murders, kidnappings and looting continued more and more Bajunis have fled.

(Bajuni Campaign, 2014)

For the Bajuni, non-lineal origins have resulted in exclusions from many dominant Somali categories. Majority-Somali origin myths created to explain the existence of non-lineal Somalis include (unsubstantiated) suggestions that the Bajuni are the descendants of escaped slaves of ancient East African origin (Kusow, 2004, p. 9, Nurse, 2013, p. 30). Anchored to the Bajuni’s African heritage and appearance, racialised (Kusow, 2004, p. 4, Besteman, 2012) ‘slavery’ narratives persist in contemporary Somalia, and the Bajuni continue to be referred to in Somali as *adoon* (‘slave’) (Kusow, 2004, p. 4, Eno, 2008), or in Swahili as *tiku* (also ‘slave’) (Bajuni Campaign, 2014). Though the majority of Bajuni people are Muslim, their ‘Other’

status is also marked by their perceived distance from Islam because they do not descend from the common Somali (Muslim) ancestor (Mire, 2015b, Mire, 2015c). In the meantime, where the nomadic and pastoral lifestyles of majority Somalis are marked as 'noble', Bajuni industries, such as fishing and agriculture, are looked upon with disdain (Kusow, 2004, p. 3, Eno, 2008, p. 140, Nurse, 2013, p. 24). On account of narratives that tell of their East African descent, their 'slave' ancestry and their traditional fishing and farming industries, the Bajuni are characterised as living 'cowardly' lifestyles (Kusow, 2004, p. 9, Nurse, 2013, p. 30), a characteristic which also informs the tone of their racialisation.

The way in which Bajuni people have been 'imagined' has informed their place and experiences in Somali society. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the population was enslaved multiple times, including on settler plantations on traditional Bajuni lands (Eno, 2008, p. 140, Nurse, 2013, p. 24), colonial settler plantations and as part of the Indian Ocean slave trade (Eno, 2008, p. 142). Due to further 'clearances' in the 1970s (Abby, 2005, p. 14; 40), Bajuni people often lived in poverty, with basic living standards (Abby, 2005, p. 23), conditions then used by the majority clans to confirm and perpetuate the Bajuni's low status (Besteman, 2012). When civil war broke out in the 1990s, the Bajuni people became targets of majority clan violence, or enforced recruitment (Menkhaus, 2003, p. 99, Besteman, 2012, p. 292). In the 2000s, they have become targets of the extremist group, al-Shabaab. As a result of their 'minority' narrativisation, and the violence that their subsequent 'minority' status has attracted, the Bajuni people have left their traditional homelands. Following decades of violence, ethnic cleansing and enslavement, Nurse comments, 'no one can be sure how many Bajuni remain in Somalia but an informed guesstimate would be at most a few hundred' (Nurse, 2013, p. 2).

For the Glasgow Bajuni campaigners, 'imaginings' of the Bajuni people as a 'minority' group has had significant consequences. As a result of violence and persecution enabled by such narratives, the campaigners had lost their families and homes and have been forced to leave the Bajuni Islands and seek asylum elsewhere.

4.3.4 Narrative 'Othering' and its communicative consequences

Though in Glasgow, the campaigners are now removed from an immediate threat of violent persecution, the effects of their narrativisation as 'minority' has persisted and has impacted on the extent to which the campaigners could mobilise community support networks in Glasgow. Attitudes of majority Somali people in Glasgow towards the Bajuni did not subscribe to the violent precedent set in Somalia. However, a gap nevertheless persisted between majority populations and the Bajuni people living in the city. One of the campaigners' case workers, Sara, recalled being in the office one day when a Somali man arrived seeking support. Learning that he was Somali, she asked if he would be interested in supporting the Bajuni campaign. He responded with a derisive snort and the reply: 'Bajuni? They're not real Somali.' This, of course, is only one person's response and does not represent the views of other Somali people living in Glasgow; however, it demonstrates how the narrative of 'Otherness' associated by majority Somalis to the Bajuni has travelled to contexts outwith Somalia.

In anticipation of responses like that of the Somali man above, the campaigners therefore did not feel that they were able to approach the broader Glasgow Somali population for assistance. As I discussed in Part 3.1, in recent years, the now-established majority community support networks have been able to mitigate or provide assistance to Somali people facing the social, cultural and geographical isolations of Dispersal; however, as, on account of their minority status, the campaigners felt they

were unable to access this assistance, the Bajuni campaigners faced the full isolating impact of Dispersed conditions. Whilst in Glasgow, the campaigners were accommodated in both primary and secondary Dispersal sites in peripheral areas of the city: in concrete sixties high-rises neighboured by empty land, in damp Victorian tenements on noisy main roads, or in dark prefabs in sprawling suburbia, often at some geographical distance from each other and from the charities and groups that supported them. Without access to the community support networks that would otherwise provide local knowledge, social connections, legal advice, and cultural orientation, the campaigners were often left dislocated from everyday activities, with neither the opportunity to participate in Somali community-orientated activities, nor the opportunity to be 'represented' by them.

At the time of fieldwork, the campaigners were not the only Bajuni people living in Glasgow. I have been unable to find population data that accounts for a Bajuni population in the city; however, in 2012, the Glasgow Education Authority found six Bajuni-speaking school pupils located in Glasgow South and six in Glasgow North East (Equality Unit, 2015). In the context of the 268 Somali-speaking pupils identified in Glasgow at the same time, this figure suggests that the Bajuni population in Glasgow remains notably and comparatively small; however, it at least acknowledges there is some Bajuni presence in the city. At the time of my fieldwork, I learned anecdotally that there was also a Bajuni community organisation in Glasgow, which had been well-enough established to participate in some city events until 2013.³³ As a result, though the Bajuni campaigners were not able to access majority Somali support networks, they were able to turn to some Bajuni contacts already resident in the city. However, bounded by a small population and geographical isolation from other UK-based Bajuni

³³ I was only able to find Bajuni community activities in the programmes of the Refugee Week festival up to and including 2013. After this date, the community were not listed in the festival.

groups, the Glasgow-based Bajuni organisation itself was only able to provide limited and informal support for the campaigners and the campaign. On account of its limited resources and residual anxieties provoked by the immigration-theme of the campaign, the campaigners found that the organisation preferred to maintain a distance from any campaign work.

Though in Glasgow, the Bajuni campaigners did not encounter the same violence that caused them to leave Somalia, their minority status nonetheless precluded both community-orientated and communicative barriers. In Glasgow, the majority/minority divide appeared to have concretised into two almost separate populations, with little interaction between them. As members of the minority Bajuni group, the campaigners were thus unable to mobilise or access the more established and comprehensive community networks of the majority, lineal Somali populations in Glasgow. Meanwhile, though they were able to rely on the limited support of Bajuni friends – themselves often in vulnerable positions – the campaigners were unable to gain formal community support. This was in part due to the Bajuni community organisation's own social and economic precariousness within Glasgow, a status which, exacerbated by the relative geographical and social isolation of Glasgow City, meant that it was structurally and politically unequipped to offer assistance to the campaign. However, it was also due to the campaigners' immigration statuses, which continued to make them pariahs to an organisation that might otherwise have offered support, as I discuss below.

4.3.5 Bajuni voices and the immigration system

In the context of the UK immigration system, the Bajuni's minority status left the campaigners vulnerable to accusations of not being 'Somali'. In some parallels to some

majority Somali attitudes towards the Bajuni clan, immigration authorities in the UK had refused the campaigners' asylum applications because they did not believe they were *Somali* Bajuni. Like in Somalia, in the UK, the Bajuni's minority status was also used to question their citizenship; however, in the UK and in the context of the immigration system, citizenship combined with the threat of the border. In the following section, I trace some of the detail of the Home Office's refusal of the Bajuni campaigners' asylum applications. In my analysis I highlight how their minority status is closely associated with 'voice' and communication, and becomes the leverage through which the campaigners are denied asylum in the UK.

- **Claiming asylum in Glasgow**



Figure 4.2: 'We are Somali': Image from the campaign's blog (Bajuni Campaign, 2014)

The campaigners all had their asylum applications refused on the grounds of 'disputed nationality'. UK immigration country guidance recommends that the Somali Bajuni should be favourably considered for asylum because they are a persecuted minority people (Home Office, 2015, p. 4). However, in the campaigners' cases, though the

Home Office accepted they were Bajuni, it did not accept that they were *Somali* Bajuni. Instead, it suggested that the campaigners were Bajuni from Kenya or further afield, and therefore not eligible for asylum. As a result of the 'disputed nationality' claim, the campaigners were required to 'prove' their Somali nationality to the UK immigration authorities. However, without the documentation to do so, they were required instead to undergo a series of language and 'cultural' tests, based on the test-case conditions set out in IAT (IAT, 2004). It states:

What is needed therefore in cases in which claims to be Somali nationals and Bajuni clan identity are made is first of all: [...]

- (a) knowledge of Kibajuni;
- (b) knowledge of Somali depending on the person's personal history;
- (c) knowledge of matters to do with life in Somali for Bajuni (geography, customs, occupations etc.).

(IAT, 2004)

Based on these requirements, in order to 'prove' that they were *Somali* Bajuni, the campaigners completed a series of Language Analysis for Determination of Origin (LADO) tests. However, as I discuss below, the testing immediately proved problematic.

- **Of voice and authenticity in the UK immigration system**

In the absence of documentation as proof of nationality, LADO is used by a number of countries, including the UK, as one of a number of elements that can determine an asylum seeker's nationality (Craig, 2012). Based on guidance from linguistics experts in 2004, LADO works from the premise that through an analysis of a combination of a person's mother tongue, accent and cultural knowledge of language-use, a person's

place of origin can be indicated, but not fully determined. Linguistic scholarship stresses that testing should be undertaken by a linguistic expert with both language and cultural knowledge-basis, and its conclusions should only be taken as guidance, not as fact (Patrick, 2014). Between 2004 and 2014, the UK Home Office made use of both 'language testing' companies and in-house methods to carry out LADO testing. However, in 2014, the UK Supreme Court ruled against a reliance on the testimony of a Swedish-based company, SPRAKAB (Weldon, 2014), which had been involved in a number of determinations for Bajuni people. Though LADO guidance emphasised the need for 'expert' linguistics, the SPRAKAB testers were criticised as inexpert (Allen, 2008), inappropriate (Lord Eassie, 2013), and unprofessional. In some cases, tests meant to determine an applicant's Kibajuni ability were conducted by testers without knowledge of the language (Amnesty International, 2012).

The Bajuni campaigners encountered many of these same issues in their asylum applications. For instance, despite Nafiz's fluency in Kibajuni, his SPRAKAB tester concluded it was an insufficient percentage of Kibajuni to Swahili³⁴ to 'prove' that Nafiz was Somali Bajuni. Instead, the tester suggested Nafiz was from Tanzania, a claim an Immigration Judge later upheld to deny his asylum claim. The other campaigners also experienced issues. For instance, despite repeated requests for a Bajuni interpreter, Faaruq was forced to undertake a substantive interview with an interpreter who only spoke Swahili. When it became clear that the interpreter was unable to understand Kibajuni, Faaruq started speaking Swahili instead; however, he felt that key elements of his testimony had been lost in translation. However, worse was to come. When Faaruq's case came for consideration, the Immigration Judge did not take into account the lack of provision of a Kibajuni interpreter, and instead focused on the lack of

³⁴ Kibajuni is a dialect of Swahili

evidence of Faaruq's ability in Kibajuni or other Somali languages.

The methods used to determine Nafiz's and Faaruq's nationality are not unique. Community organisations working with Bajuni people in other parts of the UK have also reported that testers employ tactics to discourage participants from speaking Kibajuni (Amnesty International, 2012). In addition, the premise of LADO testing for Bajuni people has been subject to critique. Allen notes that because Bajuni people are multilingual and often widely travelled, they are likely to mobilise and combine their languages in different and often subconscious ways (Allen, 2013). In these circumstances, Allen argues, determination of origin based on Bajuni people's linguistic ability is likely to be imprecise. Campbell notes that LADO testings are conducted on the premise of 'doubt' of an asylum seeker's claim and are weighted to try and disprove their claims (Campbell, 2012). Unfortunately, these points were not taken into account in either Faaruq's or Nafiz's cases. Instead, the judgements against them were made based on a perceived relationship between their language-use and their place of origin. This emphasis directly contradicts the guidance of linguistic scholars, who stress that LADO should only be used as an indicator (Patrick, 2014), and instead moves towards a 'blood and soil' (Stevens, 1999) logic that suggests that a person should speak in a particular way because they were born in a particular place.

In Faaruq's case, and in the context of this logic, the Immigration Judge understands apparent 'inconsistencies' in Faaruq's language-practice to be inconsistent with his claim to be Bajuni. As soon as the Judge identifies 'inconsistencies' in Faaruq's language-practice, he decides that they can be extended to a wider context in which 'truth' and 'authenticity' (Griffiths, 2012) exist in a fixed relationship with communicative consistency (see also Part 2.1). This enables the Judge to decide that Faaruq is not only figuratively, but also literally, not speaking the truth: 'the terms with

which you speak', he implies, 'are not an authentic representation of who you really are'. In this context, 'voice' becomes the border to the Bajuni campaigners' access to citizenship.

- **Inhibiting and inhabiting the border**

For the Bajuni campaigners, the attitudes of those with decision-making power in the immigration system towards their language, and the relationship between language, 'voice' and truth had serious consequences. After the initial refusal of their asylum applications, their cases were then further refused until the point that they were considered 'appeal-rights-exhausted'. As appeal-rights-exhausted, the campaigners were entitled to minimal 'Section 4' support, which was instated only on the condition that they were 'making reasonable attempts to return home' (Refugee Council, 2013) – a somewhat Kafkaesque requirement given that 'home' remained the source of their dispute.³⁵ 'Section 4' support provided the campaigners with accommodation in Dispersal sites, and allowed them £35 a week on a voucher system on which they were expected to live (Refugee Council, 2013). The campaigners were expected to 'sign in' at the Home Office premises in Glasgow, and they were not allowed to work. Withdrawal of 'Section 4' support was at the whim of the Home Office and frequently threatened, leaving the campaigners facing homelessness and destitution on a regular basis, and prompting a lengthy and stressful reapplication process.

In the discussion above and in Part 3.1, I argue that the conditions of Dispersal enforced upon those in the Scheme geographic, social and cultural isolation from other communities and means of support in Glasgow. I also noted the significant barriers Dispersal posed to the creation of community networks and systems through which

³⁵ Under the 2015 Immigration and Asylum Act, Section 4 support has been replaced with Section 95 support

people might be able to develop 'voice'. However, where the majority of other populations Dispersed to Glasgow had been able to move on from Dispersed conditions with the successes of their asylum applications, under 'Section 4', the Bajuni campaigners remained within the system. If the conditions of Dispersal created barriers and challenges to community formation and advocacy for other populations in the Scheme, the prolonged conditions of Dispersal enforced upon the Bajuni campaigners exacerbated these issues. Moreover, and as I discuss above, with little hope of public or community-orientated support from either of the now-established Somali organisations (the majority Somali organisation and the Bajuni organisation) in Glasgow, the Bajuni campaigners faced additionally isolating conditions to that of any Somali peers.

These conditions in the city meant that the Bajuni campaigners – already made 'marginal' to dominant Somali groups – were unable to overcome further social, political and imaginative marginalisation. Meanwhile, their status as appeal-rights-exhausted meant that the campaigners faced considerable barriers to any form of public voice. Housed in isolated and challenging accommodation, living on precarious and minimal resources, under intense pressure from hostile immigration processes, and stripped almost entirely of any pathways to citizenship, the Bajuni campaigners were pushed into the 'barest' of lives by the UK State (Agamben, 1995). 'Voice', community and citizenship inhabited the border and inhibited the border. For the campaigners, from the perspective of their multi-layered exclusions, 'commun(e)ity' seemed a long way off. In a letter to the Home Office, written to support his reapplication for 'Section 4' support, Mohamed describes the toll the system has taken on him:

I don't have any support for the moment, it's been 5 months now since Home Office stop supporting me. Since then, I end up being a beggar to the people and different Churches but now I am fed up with this situation. I think it is

better for me to be killed by Al-Shabab and those who used to torturing us before, back home there than just staying here and killed softly by hunger in the country which believe itself that have and support Human Rights (Personal Correspondence 2015)

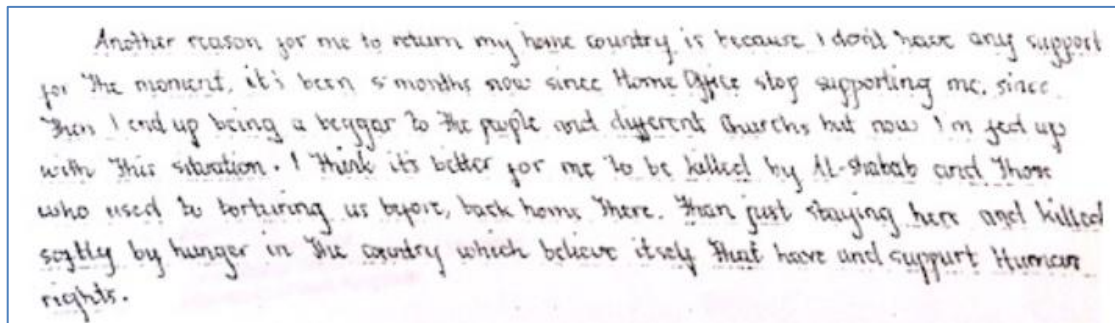
A photograph of a handwritten note on lined paper. The text is written in dark ink and reads: "Another reason for me to return my home country is because I don't have any support for the moment, it's been 5 months now since Home Office stop supporting me, since then I end up being a beggar to the people and different churches but now I'm fed up with this situation. I think it's better for me to be killed by Al-Shabab and those who used to torturing us before, back home there. than just staying here and killed softly by hunger in the country which believe itself that have and support Human rights." The handwriting is somewhat cursive and the paper has horizontal lines.

Figure 4.3: Extract from Mohamed's letter to the Home Office

4.3.6 Of Somali community and marginal voices

In the situations above, the Glasgow Bajuni campaigners encounter significant structural barriers to 'voice' that have serious and long-term implications not only for their residency in the UK, but also for their mental health and well-being. I do not wish to understate these conditions; nor do I wish to valorise actions they enact under these conditions as full-scale 'resistances'.³⁶ Nor however, do I wish only to portray them solely as subjected and subjugated. A brief note then, on marginalisation.

Drawing on fieldwork with Bajuni people in Somalia, Nurse argues that the violent and hostile conditions experienced by Bajuni people are the result of long-held social and structural discriminations. He notes, in Somalia, 'Bajunis feel marginal and marginalised' (Nurse, 2013, p. 33). These experiences of marginalisation, Nurse suggests, informs the way in which Bajuni people narrate themselves. He recalls a narrative that was told and retold to him throughout his fieldwork on the Bajuni Islands:

³⁶ Abu-Lughod argues that presenting people as 'resistant subjects' can further subject them to narrative occlusion and prematurely shut down the site and causes of their struggle (Abu-Lughod 1990).

'we are weak, we are pushed around by governments, we are just fishermen, but this is our land' (Nurse, 2013, p. 30). In Glasgow, despite the time and distance between them, and the differences in their circumstances, the campaigners repeat a similar sentiment in their blog:

We didn't ask God to make us Bajunis, but we are happy that we are Bajunis, even if we're from minority tribe and small in number but all we ask is to be recognised the way we are and where we are from.

(Bajuni Campaign, 2014)

The similarity between the narrative recounted by the Glasgow Bajuni campaigners and the narrative recounted to Nurse ten years prior is notable, and indicates its continued influence. It also, notably, articulates the Bajuni peoples' experience of marginalisation in both contexts: on the Islands of social discrimination, in Glasgow of both Somali-led and State-imposed exiles.

However, in the context of the Glasgow Bajuni campaign, although the myths, narratives, aphorisms and even blog posts that the campaigners mobilise, continue to tell stories of their people's marginalisation, they do not tell them to perpetuate their own vocal narrativisation:

We didn't ask God to make us Bajunis, but we are happy that we are Bajunis, even if we're from minority tribe and small in number but all we ask is to be recognised the way we are and where we are from.

(Bajuni Campaign, 2014)

In the campaigners' narratives, whilst marginalisation is a dominant experience, it is the Bajuni people's reaction adversity rather than the act of marginalisation itself that is emphasised. For the campaigners, marginalisation thus becomes a means through

which they can express ideas about pride in belonging, a strong connection to place, and survival in the face of adversity. By reconceptualising the terms of their marginalisation, the Bajuni campaigners work towards a 'commun(e)ity' of their own: of themselves, between themselves and on their own terms. By doing so, they take narrative control of a discourse that would otherwise see their total subjugation. Though this makes little grounded difference in the Somali/immigration contexts, it enabled the campaigners both to talk back to the narratives that did them violence, and position themselves as active – if unheard – discussants in a situation in which they otherwise do not have a voice.

The enduring relevance of the Bajuni campaigners' narrative of marginalisation across cultures, continents and borders highlights the parallels between the exclusions of 'voice' and community that are enacted upon them by both Somali and Scottish norms of belonging. On the margins of the 'majority' Somali population in Glasgow, and exiled from both bordered and civic citizenship in Scotland, the Bajuni campaigners experienced multiple layers of social and communicative violence. However, these violences did not simply run in unconnected parallel; rather their lines often crossed so that each exacerbated the conditions of the other. The violences of the UK immigration system were in part enabled by the Bajuni campaigners' 'minority' status and a lack of cultural support or knowledge arising therein. At the same time, the campaigners' marginalisation from the majority Somali community was made worse by the conditions of near destitution and social exile imposed upon them by the UK immigration system. Alongside these experiences, the social and cultural isolation arising from conditions of Dispersal to Glasgow made these already considerable barriers to community and 'voice' particularly tough. That the Bajuni campaigners' managed to retain a sense of community and 'voice' is testament to their ability to endure such hostile conditions.

Meanwhile, their case highlights that whilst many Somali people in Glasgow face challenges to their vocal and commun(e)icative belonging, these belongings themselves nevertheless retain a degree of privilege.

Part 5: Somali Voices in Scotland

Part 4 has examined the role of community in Somali experiences of (not) ‘having voice’ in Glasgow. Drawing on the experiences of people in Glasgow, it traced the plurality of ways in which internal Somali community norms shaped people’s communicative experiences. It argued that whilst a sense of community at times provided much needed spaces in which people can ‘have voice’ and dialogue, it could also limit and inhibit vocal practices. It also argued how the particular situations and backgrounds of groups and individuals might have impact upon their communicative priorities, practices and accesses. Throughout these experiences, the Glaswegian environment was identified as a constant and influential presence that shaped and informed social practices and communicative infrastructure. Part 5 gives further attention to the environmental and external factors that Somali people in Glasgow associate with experiences of ‘voice(lessness)’. Earlier in this thesis, I argued that Somali people’s vocal experiences in Glasgow were often subject to the norms, practices and cultures of ‘internal’ and ‘external’ approaches to community. If Part 4 spent time considering the effects of the former, Part 5 will consider the latter.

Part 5 therefore picks up and develops the observations I made in Part 3.2 about the relationship between ‘voice’ and community in Scotland. Here, I argued that popular, public and political rhetoric in Scotland closely associates the concept of ‘voice’ with ideas about democracy, freedom, equality and belonging, and suggested that this approach has had mixed successes in enabling Somali voices. In Part 5, I consider these claims within specific contexts. Somali participants identified three specific areas as having particular influence on their experiences of community and communication: a) ‘community development’ policy and legislation’ b) news-media narratives and b) constructions of public space in Glasgow. These three areas place

different emphases on the concept of ‘voice’: ‘community development’ policy sees ‘voice’ within government-enabled infrastructure, the news-media frames ‘voice’ within the borders of ‘imagined communities’, and constructions of space connect ‘voice’ to the occupation of ‘space’ in Glasgow. In Part 5, I consider the effects of these three areas on Somali experiences of ‘voice’ and community in Scotland; I also consider how they interact with internal practices, cultures and infrastructures of ‘voice’.

5.1 Somali voices, 'community development' and integration in Scotland

This chapter is specifically interested in how the approaches of government to the concept of community in a multicultural Scottish context have set the terms of, presented barriers to and created particular conditions of civic 'voice' for Somali people. Many of those with whom I spoke problematised the role of government in their commun(e)icative experiences in Glasgow. There was a general consensus that the Scottish Government had supported Somali people through (for example) the provision of welfare support, housing, education and cultural and religious freedom. However, many observed that whilst the government had established a good foundation of rights for Somali people, there were key areas in which its systems and structures had failed or left significant gaps and barriers for Somali people to overcome. As I will discuss below, whilst many people with whom I spoke observed that the Scottish administration appeared to be concerned with minority community rights, empowerment and 'voice' (Scottish Government, 2017b), it had not successfully translated these concerns into 'community development' and multicultural infrastructure. As a result, 'community development' and multicultural infrastructure in Scotland were often seen to create as many barriers to community and 'voice' for Somali people as they did provisions.

In this chapter, I therefore consider the impact of government approaches to community in Scotland upon Somali experiences of 'voice'. I suggest that government approaches to 'community development' and Scotland's increasingly multicultural society create a framework of 'voice' that is orientated to particular understandings of the role community by government in Scotland. Led by Somali experiences of this

infrastructure, I discuss the gaps in provision and imagination in approach, and trace the consequences for Somali experiences of ‘voice’ and community in Glasgow.

5.1.1 Civic citizenship, ‘community development’ and multiculturalism in Scotland

‘Community development’, Emejulu argues, ‘can be legitimately defined in a number of ways, reflecting competing ideals about democracy, social justice and equality, and divergent analyses about the role of the state, the market and civil society in promoting the common good’ (Emejulu, 2015, p. 2). ‘Due to its pliable form’, she continues, ‘it is often difficult to discern what is being invoked (or silenced)’ when it is used to talk about social problems and solutions (Emejulu, 2015, p. 2). In this chapter, I use the term to talk and think about ways in which government in Scotland has conceived of the role of community in Scotland, the principles and approaches to Scottish society that inform the concept, and the infrastructure that has been built to support and contain it.

In the last fifteen years in Scotland, government approaches to community and its infrastructure have developed under particular conditions. The near coincidence of the Scotland Act (1998) – establishing the devolved administration – the Immigration and Asylum Act (1999) – establishing the Dispersal Scheme and its infrastructure – and the McPherson Report (1999) – establishing an urgent need to address institutional racism in the UK – created condensed conditions that shone a spotlight on Scotland’s ‘communities’, and the new administration’s care of them. Due to the contexts of Dispersal and the McPherson report, ideas about community infrastructure developed alongside ideas about race equality and multiculturalism (see below for further discussion). Initial administrative approaches to newly-Dispersed populations in Scotland followed approaches taken by the UK Government, in which ‘community

organisations' were seen fill the gaps in social provision by the state (Griffiths et al., 2006, p. 882). In the meantime, as Scotland's multicultural population grew, government began to think about how community might feature in an increasingly diverse and 'different' society. In 2000, Parekh described multiculturalism as an approach that encouraged a 'community of communities' (Parekh, 2000); however, government responses to multiculturalism are as diverse as approaches to 'community development' (Hall, 2001, p. 3).

In Scotland, as I discuss below, a broadly liberal multicultural agenda has developed into one with a progressive focus. In the context of minority ethnic populations, the idea of community has certainly been used as a container of ethnicity (Phillips, 2009, p. 17). As I also discuss below, it has also become more overtly involved in the infrastructure of democratic and social participation and representation. Contemporary Scottish approaches to 'community empowerment' are defined by a comprehensive infrastructure of 'public committees, consultative exercises and access to public fora' (Modood and Meer, 2012, p. 4). This infrastructure is imagined in tiered terms, beginning with 'community organisations', which make representations to government-sponsored community intermediaries, which then make representations of their issues to government. In this context, local 'communities' are imagined as distillations of democracy, with the 'voice' of the people at their core (Emejulu, 2015, p. 50). In recent policies and legislation (discussed below), the Scottish Government has mobilised community to support people's 'voices' in two ways: first, by encouraging participation in community infrastructures, and second, by facilitating and listening to their representations. These initiatives rely on the tenants of contribution, representation and participation, which can be closely associated with the principles of 'meritocratic egalitarianism' that inform Scottish approaches to society (Arshad, 2008).

However, as I have discussed in Part 3.2, though these principles have enabled some positive experiences of community and ‘voice’ for Somali people in Scotland, they have also exerted limitations. To what extent does this extend into Somali people’s experiences of ‘community development’ infrastructure? And with what consequences for their voices?

- **Community and civic citizenship in post-Dispersal Scotland**

The roots of current approaches to ‘community development’ can be found in the the legislation that establishes devolved powers to Scotland. The Scotland Act (1998) states that subsequent Scottish administration will be committed to:

‘the prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between persons on grounds of sex or marital status, on racial grounds, or on grounds of disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or of other personal attributes, including beliefs or opinions, such as religious beliefs or political opinions’

(UK Government, 1998)

Though the Scotland Act’s (1998) commitment to social equality has remained a foundational principle in subsequent law-making and governance, governmental and administrative approaches to Scotland’s increasingly plural society have also been influenced by other legislation. Released in February 1999, the McPherson Report made recommendations for government across the UK to acknowledge and address the institutional racism that continued to pervade its structures. Its influence is seen in post-Millennial Scottish policy and legislation that sought to put these recommendations in place. In 2002, the Scottish Executive launched its *One Scotland: Many Cultures* initiative, which sought to foreground anti-racist work in public institutions, and

developed a long-term advocacy for multiculturalism in Scotland (Piacentini, 2012, p. 126). At the same time, the Race Relations Act (Scotland) Order (2002) legislated for these concerns, prompting the Scottish Executive to develop its Race Equality Scheme (2006), which stated:

We want to ensure that all relevant groups are able to participate and we want to show how they have been consulted. With very few exceptions every issue has a race equality dimension which needs to be identified and reflected in practice

(Scottish Executive, 2006; Section 5.3.5)

The McPherson Report's influence can be seen in the Race Equality Scheme's recognition of the potential for social and racial inequality to act as a significant barrier to a group's participation in civic life. The Scheme articulates a concern for participation and consultation – dialogue – with those affected by structural discrimination.

By 2008, the (now) Scottish Government's Race Equality Statement 2008-11 (Scottish Government, 2008) had developed these concerns into an infrastructure that focussed on 'integration' of 'minority ethnic (including Gypsy/Traveller), refugee, asylum seeker and faith communities':

Taking into account our public sector equality duties and drawing on the evidence from our stakeholders, our Review of Race Equality Work in Scotland and the work of the Equal Opportunities Committee of the Scottish Parliament, we will structure our work towards race/ equality and refugee integration around the following themes:

Improved opportunities for people from minority ethnic (including Gypsy/Traveller), refugee, asylum seeker and faith communities – taking action to address the barriers which are at present preventing people from those communities from achieving what they are capable of.

More responsive communities, where people from minority ethnic (including Gypsy/Traveller), refugee, asylum seeker and faith communities are better supported by services, whether specialist or mainstream.

Safer communities, with lasting connections between people from all communities - minority ethnic (including Gypsy/Traveller), refugee, asylum seeker and faith communities and the wider community. Communities where all feel valued and able to live safely, respecting and valuing the contributions of all. Communities where hate crime based on race or faith is tackled effectively and where such crimes, in time, are reduced.

More active and vibrant communities, with increased participation by people from minority ethnic (including Gypsy/Traveller), refugee, asylum seeker and faith communities in all aspects of mainstream community and civic activity. Increased engagement will help the integration and strengthening of community relations and develop understanding of our shared goals and aspirations. It will also contribute to the delivery of better services and provisions as the needs of communities become better understood.

Figure 5.1: Excerpt from the Race Equality Statement (2008)

In its language of ‘integration’, the Race Equality Statement (2008) reflects the increasing role of a multicultural framework in infrastructures of community representation and participation. However, whilst the language of the statement implies a two-way process of ‘mutual’ (Kirkwood et al., 2015, p. 144) community building, the burden of responsibility is placed upon ‘refugee’ groups (‘we will structure our work towards [...] refugee integration’). Under this latter burden, though the statement espouses ‘mutual’ integration, it frames the process in terms more akin to an assimilationist approach (Modood, 2005, p. 3). This is not the only issue with the statement. The terms used to define ‘minority’ groups are themselves problematic because they imply a homogenous ‘minority ethnic’ experience across diverse groups, and defines them in terms of racial opposition to dominant, (white) Scottish groups (more on this below). Though the Statement therefore attempts a multicultural

framework for Scotland's plural society, its approach does not fully ascribe to a progressive, multicultural agenda (Modood, 2005, p. 3).

Changes in more recent legislation and policy have attempted to address some of the problems of the 2008 Statement. The 2014 relaunch of the *One Scotland* (Scottish Government, 2017b) campaign presented a vision of a community-orientated multicultural society that sought to advance civic frameworks of belonging. More recently, the 2017 *New Scots* report (Scottish Government, 2017a) has made recommendations for progressive, mutual 'integration' strategies for asylum seekers and refugees. These initiatives reflect approaches that have sought to bring a more nuanced understanding to the respective experiences of asylum seeking and refugee communities and the experiences of established, minority ethnic communities in Scotland. These initiatives are a progression from the previous approaches that have marked minority ethnic people both as homogenous, and as separate from common processes of citizenship. In this context, the 2015 Community Empowerment legislation sought to include all of Scotland's 'communities' in its push for improved community representation and participation:

the Scottish Government is committed to our communities being supported to do things for themselves - community empowerment - **and to people having their voices heard** in the planning and delivery of services - community engagement and participation.

(Scottish Government, 2015a; emphasis added)

Whilst the Community Empowerment Act has sought to develop community infrastructure, the Race Equality Framework 2016-2030 acknowledged that minority ethnic groups in Scotland continue to face specific barriers to representation and participation. Stating a commitment to improving 'community cohesion and safety, participation and representation, education, employability, and health and home'

(Scottish Government, 2016a), the Statement seeks to embed the government's approach to social justice and race equality within a framework of 'community development'.

The development of community-orientated and race-equality policy in Scotland over the last decade has reflected the Scottish government's changing approaches towards social plurality, race, citizenship and belonging. The development of policy and legislation arguably might be seen a move towards a conscious articulation of a Scottish multiculturalism: as the 'outgrowth' (Modood and Meer, 2012, p. 4) of the 'first and second generation [liberal democratic] norms of freedom and equality' into a 'third generation norm of [multicultural] legitimacy' (Tully, 2002, p. 102). Here, it is suggested, the development of Scotland's minority ethnic 'communities' is as integral to Scottish society as the development of any other 'communities'. Though, the government acknowledges, minority ethnic groups may face social and cultural barriers to civic participation and representation, the infrastructure of community is nevertheless the context in which they are become civic citizens and the means with which their 'voices' will be heard. However, though community infrastructure in Scotland may promote equality of 'voice' and citizenship, minority ethnic experiences suggest that in practice it does not necessarily materialise (Meer, 2015, Netto, 2008, Emejulu and Bassel, 2015). This is certainly the case in Somali experiences of community infrastructure in Scotland, as I discuss below.

5.1.2 Infrastructural gaps and representative inequalities

For the Somali community in Scotland, though to some extent the infrastructural provisions and requirement of civic participation in Scotland enhanced and supported Somali community activities, the same infrastructure also presented considerable issues.

However, whilst the infrastructure was at times problematic, issues of under-participation and under-representation became complex in combination with the various internal community complications articulated in Part 4. Nadifa articulates this complex dynamic, which I unpick here. She comments,

Habaryar, anigana fikradeyda aan dhiibto. Waddan kasta dad wanaagsan iyo dad xumiba wuu leeyahay. Haddii dadku aaysan laheen dad iyaga ka mid ah oo matala iskuna haleyn kara, u doodi kara dhibaatooyinka dadkooda heysta, dadkaasi weey dhiibaatoonayaan. Dadkani ma heystaan dad matala oo u dooda, dhexdhexaadiya iyaga iyo dowlada. Haddaan lahaan laheen community, waxaan heli laheen awood aan kula xaajoono dowladda, oo u dooda xuquuqda dadkeena. Waxeey baari lahaayeen sababaha dadkeena loo xirey, sababta ilmaheena waddooyinka loogu jir iyo bahdilo. Bil matalan, shicibka Pakistaniga waxeey leeyihiin komunity matasha oo dowladda saldhig ku leh, waxeey leeyihiin dad u dooda, annaga (Somali) ma heysano. Waddankan waan ku cusub nahay, waxaan halkan ku nool nahay muddo 20 sano ka yar.

Aunty,

Let me share my thoughts too.

In every country there are good people and bad people. If individuals don't have representatives from the community which one can rely on, that can raise issues on behalf of its people, these people suffer. These individuals don't have representative that can speak for them and that can bridge the gap between the government and its people.

If there were a community, they could have dealt with the government, they could question on the rights of its people. They could enquire why people get arrested, why are children being abused in the streets. For example, the Pakistan community they have representatives within the government, they have people who speak for them.

We [Somalis] don't have this. We are new people in the country, we live in this country

less than 20 years.

The issues Nadifa identifies with community representation initially appear to have a primarily internal focus. The first problem she identifies is with a lack of focussed internal community representation: though there are those who seek to represent, she notes, their representative efforts are not successful. The second problem she identifies is with a plural community, a lack of community focus and internal disagreements over representation. In a government infrastructure that requires community-focussed representation, she notes, the rather disparate Somali population have had few successes.

As discussed in Part 4, between ‘internal’ social hierarchies, and challenges to ‘internal’ community infrastructure, the contemporary Somali population in Glasgow is certainly faced with the challenge of community consolidation or coherence when it comes to matters of centralised public representation. In other parts of the UK (for instance, Manchester, London), internal Somali community divisions have been made worse by ‘community development’ infrastructure, which has incentivised competition and resulted in violent rivalry between different social groups (Zetter et al., 2005, p. 178).³⁷ In Glasgow, Somali community divisions are not sufficiently entrenched for such drastic clashes to occur. However, concerns remained about how ‘community development’ infrastructure interacted with existing internal inequalities. Though clan had not concretised in Glasgow, its influence nevertheless persisted. In the context of ‘community development’, membership of a dominant clan increased a person’s access to resources and support from other clan members across the UK. Those who belonged to dominant clans in Glasgow therefore had an increased likelihood of having the

³⁷ Griffiths’s observations might also be read alongside Kapteijns’s (2004) argument that the colonial resourcing of social differences in Somalia further enhanced social division.

resources and support to establish community group to represent their interests. With better chances of forming a community group, members of dominant clans therefore also had better chances of accessing government-sponsored 'community development' infrastructure. Amongst those with whom I spoke, there was therefore concern that 'community development' infrastructure in Scotland would only exacerbate existing internal inequalities because it would only give resources to those with enough privilege to form a community group. There was a concern that those already with access to 'community development' support would continue to gain 'community development' support, whilst new or minority groups would continue to struggle to gain access. There was therefore the resulting concern that government support would only exacerbate existing internal inequalities.

As a result of these concerns, many considered Somali community groups in Glasgow to be unrepresentative of Somali people. In addition, people expressed frustration at the government's apparent lack of knowledge of the internal impact of its infrastructures. Having worked with a number of governmental organisations in Scotland, Ishmail vented his frustration at persistent gaps in institutional knowledge in Scotland about Somali social dynamics. He comments,

there's just so much literature on Somalis, and if that type of population are coming [to your country], the first thing that you do, you do the research so you know what they do...

...does it seem that they [the authorities] care? I don't think so...

Drawing on his experience of the authorities' responses to small-scale issues involving Somali individuals, he worried that in the eventuality of a crisis involving the Somali community, the authorities would have no knowledge of how to respond:

...and then one day, shit will hit the fan and there is a way they can respond, you know?

The lack of institutional knowledge or awareness of the Somali population in Glasgow had a series of consequences for their attempts to participate in civic life through community-orientated infrastructure. The first, as Ishmail's experience indicates, resulted in a continued lack of accounting for how existing 'community development' infrastructure might interact with Somali community norms. The second resulted in little room for Somali-specific experiences or provisions to be taken into account in the broader infrastructure. Dinar comments,

Majooritiga sida dadka ay yacni si fiican ay raali ka yihiin yacni dadka waa loo siiyaa. Way jiraan dhibaato xagga luqadda ah.

Taana wey iskudadayaan in ay turjubaano keenaan marka in la xaliyo, lakin inta badan... wey dhacdaa mar mar in qof lageeyo guri la siiyo meel xaafad dad yacni neceb ajinebiga oo dhibaato kala kulma. Laakiin boqolki sideetan dadka raali ka yihiin baa wax loo siiyaa. ... kolley anigu shaqsi baan ahay.

the first thing I would say is, most of the community get an equal service to other communities, we might think we are treated a different way but to be honest with you, 80% most of it is similar

Waleed interprets and adds,

cos the government give the service

and stand away

so we are *equal* to the other communities,
they are giving us the same thing.

Maybe there's a problem with the *language* sometimes,
or sometimes they give people housing far away from the community
and its difficult for them,

far away from the halal meat,
far away from the mosque,
far away from the schools and the city centre,

which they may not like

and prefer to be around the Somali community areas

but unfortunately this is *equal* to everybody.

Dinar acknowledges that the Somali community has benefitted from government-supported community infrastructures and initiatives. However, he notes, though this means that Somali people have been provided with the basis of community, this does not mean that their specific needs and issues have been considered. Rather, Dinar suggests, Somali people experience community development infrastructure in the same terms that other communities in similar situations also experience it. However, because government-sponsored infrastructure applies fixed systems of representation and participation across all 'community groups', it does not have a mechanism in which community-specific issues might be considered. The issues that Dinar lists above – for instance, distance from stores that provide Halal food, or distance from places of worship or education – may seem to be at the limits of what government provision can account for. However, as I have discussed in Parts 3 and 4, the geographic and cultural isolation caused by these very features of life in Glasgow City have both immediate and long-term consequences for Somali opportunities to develop community. A standardised approach to minority 'community development' combined with a lack of infrastructural flexibility begins from an assumption that all minority 'communities' in

Scotland have a parity of access to the basics of community infrastructure in Scotland. Dinar's comments highlight that such access is in fact a privilege in itself.

Arshad argues that rhetorics of egalitarianism in Scotland fail to account for social and institutional inequality because they fail to acknowledge structural difference (Arshad, 2008, p. 37; see Part 3.2). I would suggest that Somali experiences of government-sponsored indicate that 'community development' infrastructure can also be charged with the same approach. As Ishmail argues above, government and intermediary knowledge of Somali people is insufficient and under-engaged. As a result, as Dinar argues, they have not accounted for the social and structural inequalities that inhibit Somali experiences of community in Glasgow. By failing to take this into account, 'community development' infrastructure passively contributes to barriers of community-formation that Somali people experience in Scotland. This further contributes to a cycle of under- and misrepresentation in 'community development' infrastructure: facing barriers to community formation, Somali people have been unable to access 'community development' infrastructure; because they have been unable to access this infrastructure, they have neither been able to represent themselves to government nor make interventions on the infrastructure that has contributed to their under-representation. As a result, the Somali population remained under-represented to government and saw little prospect of this changing.

The impression that the government had little knowledge or interest in the Somali population's presence in Scotland was not allayed by comments made by government representatives. For instance, in 2014, three years after the 2011 Census had recorded 1591 Somali people in Scotland, the (then) International Development Minister claimed that though there was a significant Muslim population in Scotland,

because ‘Somalis’ still remained ‘South of the Border’, they were not the subjects of government interest (Garavelli, 2014):

Where recent events have led to questions being raised about the efficacy of the UK’s counter-terrorism strategy, Prevent, Yousaf says the composition and scale of Scotland’s Muslim community makes it less likely extremism would go unnoticed. “South of the Border you have Somalis, Egyptians, Arabs, people from the Indian sub-continent, whereas in Scotland it’s by and large Pakistanis and it’s much smaller,” he says. “Because the community is close-knit, the chances are if someone was expressing extreme views, someone would notice and pass on their concerns to the individual, their family or the police. Also the police have built up a really good relationship with Muslim communities.”

Figure 5.2: Context of Humza Yousaf’s comments about Somali populations
(Garavelli, 2014)

Though it is perhaps no bad thing that Somali people in Scotland were not explicitly being targeted by the Prevent initiative, Yousaf’s comments again drawn on a sense of egalitarianism, this time mobilising it to claim a lack of ‘difference’ amongst the ‘close-knit Muslim community’ in Scotland. As my discussions in Part 5.3 will suggest, Somali people did not necessarily experience a sense of egalitarianism within the Muslim community in Glasgow. This again, is not helped by comments that acknowledge neither their presence nor their different experiences. Subsumed in broad definitions of ‘Muslim’ or ‘minority ethnic’ ‘communities’ in Scotland, the Somali population was at best invisible in, and at worst erased from infrastructures of community and ‘voice’ in Scotland.

5.1.3 ‘Refugee communities’ and community development infrastructure

One of the ‘communities’ in which ‘community development’ and multicultural infrastructures placed Somali people was associated with people of ‘refugee

backgrounds'. For instance, towards the end of my fieldwork, I started working with some friends who wished to develop a Somali community project that, by exploring crossovers in Scottish and Somali cultures, would emphasise Glasgow Somalis as citizens of the city. In doing so, we wanted to move away from the 'refugee' frame of reference to explore other Somali experiences of citizenship in Scotland. However, we found that the funding available from many of the community 'intermediaries' continued to be orientated towards those who were refugees or – crucially – those who wished to emphasise their 'refugee backgrounds'. Whilst we acknowledged the need for continued support of people with refugee backgrounds, and the continued effect of refugee legacies on those who now had citizenship, we found the framing of post-Dispersal populations inadequately express contemporary Somali experiences in Glasgow. We were eventually able to find a funding-source for which our project qualified elsewhere; however, at the time we were surprised that the government-sponsored intermediary organisations did not appear to have developed their funding and resourcing frameworks in parallel with the changing social and community dynamics of post-Dispersal populations in Glasgow.

In her ethnography on West African community groups in Glasgow, Piacentini observes a comparable situation (Piacentini, 2012). She observes that – a decade after the groups were 'Dispersed' to Glasgow, and long after many had gained leave to remain – the populations' community organisations continued to be defined as 'Refugee Community Organisations' (RCOs) (Piacentini, 2012, p. 19). Alongside others (Griffiths et al., 2006, Zetter et al., 2005), she argues that this infrastructural (mis)definition should be associated with the enduring legacy of the Dispersal Scheme. 'RCO' structures existed long before the implementation of the Dispersal Scheme. In the decades preceding the Scheme, government had relied upon incoming migrant

populations to develop their own community infrastructure to support their arrival in the UK. Government found this emphasis on self-supporting community infrastructure to be beneficial because it meant arriving populations received support with minimal intervention by – or indeed, support, acknowledgement or resources from – the State (Griffiths et al., 2006, p. 882, Zetter et al., 2005, p. 171). The infrastructure of the Dispersal Scheme sought to formalise and further benefit from this dynamic: ‘refugee community organisations’ (RCOs) were envisaged as taking key roles in ‘reception arrangements’ (Griffiths et al., 2006, p. 882), alongside by government-sponsored refugee support infrastructure.³⁸ However, though these arrangements were made within a specific Dispersal context, they remain influential in how minority ethnic community infrastructure is approached today. In Piacentini’s research, the ‘RCO’ framework continues to inform how West African community groups are defined, even though the term ‘refugee’ no longer reflects their status or experience (Piacentini, 2012, p. 19). What are now ‘community organisations’ are still imagined in the terms of the context of their members’ arrival to Glasgow as refugees. She argues that this not only has implications for how they are imagined within Scotland’s multicultural dynamic, but also has implications for the type of support that they can access, the type of funding and resources they receive and the form of representation they have in civic society.

Piacentini’s observations chime with our experiences of project-creation above. For Hussain, the project’s main facilitator, the experience was unsurprising. Having been involved in other Somali ‘community development’ projects, he had found the scope of any resources available were usually orientated towards a ‘refugee’ frame of reference. He observed,

³⁸ Part 3.1 discusses how a lack of existing ‘RCO’ infrastructure in Glasgow meant that the Somali population faced further barriers and difficulties on arrival.

yeah, Somalis are in that bracket – refugees –

Thinking a little more on the issue, and remembering he is soon to begin working on a project with one of the government-sponsored intermediary, he adds,

... and I want to give them [the intermediary] that kind of feedback, because once you box someone as a refugee...

He gestures in frustration towards our notes on all the dead ends we have met by trying to avoid a ‘refugee’ frame. He comments,

you can live here a long time [but]...

...Somalis are not refugees any longer, they are British

As Hussain’s comments imply, the limited framework with which government-sponsored intermediaries offered support and funding often encouraged people with ‘refugee backgrounds’ to continue to exclusively identify in those terms. In some instances, Hussain explained, this was problematic because it offered no other lens through which communities with refugee backgrounds could be viewed. Piacentini argues that the failure of policy-makers and researchers to move beyond exclusively ‘refugee-orientated’ frameworks fixed the activities of West African communities in a past context of Dispersal (Piacentini, 2012, p. 19). In Hussain’s experience, the association between Somalis and refugees had become so normalised that it had been loosed from its Dispersal moorings, to exist in a perpetual present in which, regardless of context, Somalis would be framed as ‘refugees’. Perpetually incentivised to identify as such by government-sponsored, ‘refugee-orientated’ funding infrastructure, Somali people were asked to participate in frameworks in which their citizenship was constructed as somehow limited on account of their origins, regardless of their status in

the UK. Though ‘community development’ policy in Scotland endorsed a multicultural society through active, *civic* citizenship, its infrastructure serves implicit reminders that for people of ‘refugee backgrounds’, this citizenship is conditioned on and by the hospitality of the State.

There is also a racialised legacy to this association. In this context, the frame ‘of refugee background’ works euphemistically to refer to minority ethnic populations in Scotland (see, for instance, the racialised association in the 2008 Race Equality Statement’s definition of ‘minority community’ as ‘minority ethnic (including Gypsy/Traveller), refugee, asylum seeker and faith’ groups). In this context, support that already seeks to place an implied limit on Somali citizenship in Scotland associates this limit with racialised categories. In these circumstances, Somali people were presented with a choice: to access the infrastructure of ‘community development’, even though it places conditions and limits on their citizenship? Or to not access the support, not defer to its terms, but also not enhance civic participation?

5.1.4 Integration and an ethics of hospitality?

Of the options available to Somali people in Scotland’s multicultural framework, policies of ‘integration’ place emphasis on the former: to participate in ‘community development’ infrastructure in order to be part of civic society. Within the multicultural framework, community participation in civic life nominally *is* ‘integration’ because it fulfils its guiding integrative tenants of communities in dialogue with one another. In progressive systems of ‘integration’ Modood notes, in order to facilitate the ‘mutual’ change and dialogue espoused by multicultural tenants, mechanisms of ‘integration’ work hard to emphasis establish an equitable relationship between communities, whilst taking into account their social and contextual differences (Modood, 2005). In this

sense, 'integration' dynamics might be read as the very embodiment of Scottish egalitarianism (Arshad, 2008), as they strive for an exchange of equitable, rights based 'recognition' (Taylor, 1994).

However, in practice this dynamic was rarely achieved, and certainly did not feature amongst the experience of Somali people with whom I spoke. Instead 'integration' was seen as marking the citizenship of those outwith the white, naturalised norm as conditioned on limits of race, immigration and religion. This dynamic greatly frustrated the group of teenage Somali women, who argued that despite the Glasgow Somali population's now-lengthy residence in the city, established social networks, community connections and civic and naturalised citizenship, the Somali population would only be recognised as civic citizens in 'minority', limited and unequal terms. Our conversation begins,

Me: ok, so [you would say] people need to get to know you [young Somalis], people need to have a better understanding...?

Mariyam: [defiantly] they need to be **educated**.

Me: other people in Glasgow?

Mariyam: yeah

Duniya: I think the Scottish people, or the other people that live here should be more *open-minded* and...

Mariyam and Faduma: [nodding] umm-hmm

Duniya: ...more *inviting* to other people because I've heard some interviews, blogs and stuff, that they're saying all black people or Muslim people, they don't *integrate* with the rest of the community, while I think we integrate but *they don't give us that chance* and **they're not doing their part**... so I think they should make **also** an effort to get to know us, you know...?

The young women argue that emphases on the Somali population's race and religion contributed to a dynamic that presented the Somali community as 'lesser than' the meta-community and established an uneven 'integrative' environment. The dynamic between the Somali community and the meta-community is failing, they argue, because it is only Somali people who are actively taking part in what is meant to be a mutual exchange. They talk about their experiences in terms of failed and unfair hospitality: the 'host' sets the 'mutual' terms of 'integration' but it is the guest who remains responsible for its successes or failures; when 'integration' is unsuccessful because the host fails to fulfil the terms of mutual exchange, Somalis are framed as unsatisfactory 'guests'. Framed as unsatisfactory guests, they find themselves further censored, as 'ungrateful', uncooperative and not 'citizen' – as perpetual 'guests', who will continue to be a 'burden' on the host.

The language of hospitality has been used in public and political discourses to advance ideas about who does and does not belong in the State, the nation or the public sphere. Most frequently, it is used to speak in metaphorical terms about how the (boundaries of) 'welcome' extended to migrants, in which the State ('the host') is 'imagined' to have extended 'generous' hospitality to the migrant ('the guest') (Phipps, 2012, Back, 2007, p. 42, Gibson, 2007, Pirouet, 2010, Hill, 2016); however, it is also used to rhetoricise the relationship between dominant social groups and minority communities. Back comments, in the UK, 'there is little doubt on whose terms integration is defined. [...] The language of 'shared citizenship' and 'mutualism' is merely a way of saying that the responsibility for [...] multiculturalism is laid at the door of Black and Asian communities' (Back 2007, p.32). Here norms racialise the hospitality dynamic, and construct communities of colour as perpetual 'guests' of the 'hosts' of dominant, white populations. Derrida argues that the framework of

hospitality expresses archetypal ideas about how one responds to encounters with the stranger (Derrida and Dufourmantelle, 2000). Drawing on the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas, Derrida argues that hospitable situations are ethically-charged (Derrida and Dufourmantelle, 2000) and raise questions such as: how might ‘the host’, who has shelter and resources, treat ‘the guest’ who has nothing? And how might ‘the guest’, a stranger, treat ‘the host’, into whose home they have been invited? Archetypal hospitable relationships might therefore be understood in terms of an ethics of mutual recognition: of ‘the host’ of ‘the guest’s’ position and vice versa.

In the young women’s experiences above, though the dynamics of ‘integration’ might be framed in terms of ‘hospitality’, the ethics of mutual recognition have been disregarded. Though ‘integration’ is framed in terms of mutual, hospitable activity, the reality is one of unevenly weighted exchange, the terms of which are defined solely by ‘the host’. In this dynamic, the processes and pressures of integration are seen largely as the responsibility of the Somali population; at the same time, it is the Somali population who receive the penalties for integrative failure. In the meantime, the ‘integration’ dynamic itself is a failure the ethics of hospitality – of the ethics of mutual recognition. The terms with which ‘the host’ defines Somali people as ‘guest’ are the terms of racial hierarchy and bordered citizenship. In these terms, Somali people are not simply marked as ‘different’; they are instead are marked ‘less’. In this situation, the ethical imperative of hospitable exchange fails because ‘the host’ does not recognise Somali people in equitable terms.

5.1.5 Towards dialogue?

Amongst almost all of those with whom I spoke to on this topic, the proposed solution to the persistent misrepresentation or under-representation of the Somali population in

Scotland was notably unanimous: increased dialogue between Somali communities and others in Scotland, including – and especially – the government at both local and national level. Some argued that the responsibility was primarily one for the Somali community. The young women suggested that the Somali community needed to look beyond its own boundaries and divisions to find points of connection with other communities in Scotland:

Faduma: but how would they get to know us?

Duniya: I think like **conferences** sort of stuff, cos there is a lot of communities in Glasgow from different backgrounds, so I think its becoming more multicultural, so there so be more conferences... and there should be *communities* - that **shouldn't just be Somalis** - there should be, like, *wider communities*, that all people can join, and *make their voices heard*

Duniya suggests that a more sustained, culturally-orientated mobilisation of Glasgow's multicultural population would help the Somali population further engage with community dynamics in the city. Hawa presented a different perspective. Though she acknowledged cultural and social engagement with other populations was important, she argued that increased government-engagement was first necessary to address the continued structural inequalities experienced by the Somali community. She argued that in this situation, it was the responsibility of government to actively seek out dialogue with populations that were under-represented. She comments,

Waxaan aga baahan nahay ineey imaadaan komunitigeena.

Waxaan u baahanahey in nala dhiirri galiyo si aan codkeena

u dhiibano. Waxaan dooneynaa inaan ka qeyb galno

shirarkooda. Sababtoo ah haweenka waa kuwa ilmaha iyo

*dhalinyaradaba barbaariya. Waxaan u baahanahey in nala
saacido si aan uga qeyb galno shirarka dhacaya, taasi
waxeey inoo fasaxeysaa inaan codkeena iyo ra'yigeena
dhiibano.*

They can come to our community.

We want to be empowered to voice our concerns.

We want to participate in their meetings. [...]

We need help when there are meetings because we
want to express ourselves.

Like Duniya, Hawa sees increased dialogue between the Somali population and outside organisations as the key to improving their situation. Waleed and his contemporaries make a similar argument, but push the suggestion a little further. Waleed comments,

what I'm going to suggest is, [...] I would suggest that like you they come and
integrate with us and *talk to us* and then they will know how the community is
-we're a friendly community

[...]

welcome and be with us, we teach you Somali language, we teach you our
sayings and our wisdoms and all these things, welcome, come back again and
again

Waleed suggestion imagines the 'integrative' host/guest dynamic, to which Somali people are usually subject, in reverse. Using the language of hospitality – of 'welcome', of 'taking people in'; of 'meeting us', or 'adapting to us', or of 'being with us' – he imagines Somali people as 'the hosts' and outside communities as 'the guests'. By making Somali people the 'hosts' of their own 'community development', Waleed's re-framed vision of integrative hospitality makes sure they are no longer the objects of government, but participative citizens. However, rather than promoting the same inequitable 'integration' dynamic to which Somali people are usually subject, Waleed

suggests ‘integration’ in dialogical terms. By inviting other communities to ‘come and talk to us [...] and be with us [so that] we teach you Somali language’, Waleed encourages communicative associations rather than communicative oppositions or dominations. In this sense, it could be argued, he promotes a form of ‘communicative hospitality’ that seeks to address the thing lacking in contemporary ‘integration’ dynamics: an ethics of mutual ‘recognition’.

5.1.6 Community infrastructure and vocal inequality

Part 5.1 has argued that ‘community development’ infrastructure in Scotland impacted Somali experiences of ‘voice’, citizenship and belonging both within the Somali community in Glasgow and in Scotland’s ‘meta’ community (Netto, 2008, p. 59). The framework of ‘community development’ infrastructure orientated understandings and mobilisations of community and ‘voice’ towards definitions that placed them within a liberal democratic and institutionally contained environment. Here, both ‘voice’ and community were understood to be integral parts of social dynamics in Scotland; however, they were also understood as subjects and objects of government and orientated towards the institution in which they are embedded. As the Somali contributors to Part 5.1 observe, this often meant that ‘community development’ infrastructure appears less concerned with Somali community development than with the maintenance of its own form.

Government approaches to community and ‘voice’ in Scotland therefore situate Somali ‘voices’ within frames of reference that were orientated towards principles of liberal democracy, social representation and participation and ‘naïve egalitarianism’ (see Arshad, 2008). Within this environment, ‘voice’ was associated with civic citizenship and community representation, and failure to ‘speak’ in these terms means

that one did not speak at all. However, though Somali people in Glasgow readily recognised the terms of ‘voice’ that this imposed, government responses to ‘community development’ infrastructure appeared less aware of the dynamic. As a result, though government policy and infrastructure were seen to have successfully made some provision for social inclusion, its success in other areas for the Somali population was seen as limited. The experiences above show that continued governmental unfamiliarity with Somali cultures and community meant that the sometimes difficult intersections between Somali social norms and government-led infrastructure remained unaccounted for. The experiences and analysis above also highlight how the structural inequalities already encountered by the Somali population at times exacerbated existing barriers to community based participation and representation. Those who wished to engage with ‘community development’ infrastructure were often caught up in a self-fulfilling cycle of under-representation in which a lack of ‘voice’ meant that people were less likely to be able to access the infrastructure that might otherwise amplify it. Whilst ‘community development’ policy sought to enable community self-sufficiency and self-articulation, it failed to account for the structural inequalities that prevented Somali people either mobilising as a community, or accessing community support infrastructure. As a result, the current inclusion of Somali people in community development initiatives remained emblematic at best: ‘tick-box exercises that only paid ‘lip service’ to their place in Scottish society, whilst failing to address the social, cultural and infrastructural issues that prevented their participation in community.

5.2 'Voice', citizenship and 'imagined communities': Somali experiences of the Scottish news media

In Part 5.1, I discuss how government understandings of the relationship between 'voice' and community placed Somali voices within a framework of citizenship and representation that contributed to the population's experience of communicative and structural inequality in Scotland. However, government infrastructures of 'voice' are only one element of the external influences upon Somali people's communicative experiences in Glasgow. Somali people also identified news-media representations of Somali people as placing restrictions of citizenship and 'voice' upon them. For instance, Abdulkadir comments,

Newspaperska wadanka. newspapero waxaa jira aad u neceb dadka afrika iyo dadka soomaalida.

There are newspapers in this country that I really hate, as they negatively portray Africans and Somalis.

Waleed adds,

the newspapers...
what it seems with the newspapers at times,
is that they are racist.
I think they put their nose on the bad side of the community

Dinar comments,

Waxaan u arkaa dheh aniga shaqsiyan in uu meediyuhu had iyo jeer wax xun uu ka sheego

I think my personal opinion is,

They [the media] always pick up the bad
side of the country and the people

In Part 5.2, I make use of Anderson's now-famous argument about 'imagined communities' and the news-media (Anderson, [1983] 2006) to discuss and analyse how news-media representations of Somali people in Scotland impact their experiences of 'voice'. By enabling its readership to 'imagine' their shared experiences of reading the news, and by disseminating imaginatively rich narratives within its content, Anderson argues, the news-media creates a type of community that has a shared sense of who belongs within it and who does not (Anderson, [1983] 2006). Frequently, he suggests, this 'imagined community' informs an understanding of 'the nation'. In this sense, the news-media in Scotland shares many of the concerns of government-sponsored 'community development' infrastructure: both are interested in ideas of citizenship and belonging in Scotland, both connect these ideas to the concept of community, and both are concerned with and implicated in the process of community representation. However, the news-media's approach to community also differs from government approaches. The news-media is not so much concerned with participation and representation in Scotland's civic community as it is with inclusions in and exclusions from Scotland's 'national' community. Abdulkadir's, Waleed's and Dinar's comments above suggest that Somali people routinely experienced representational exclusions from new-media constructions of an 'imagined [Scottish] community'. In this chapter, I discuss how media representations of Somali people in Scotland have impact upon how they are 'imagined' as part of 'the community'. I argue that this has consequences for Somali 'voices' in both representational terms and real-life. Finally, I argue that the terms with which the news-media 'imagines' Somali 'voices' set the conditions for particular experiences of expression, inclusion and exclusion.

5.2.1 The news media and 'imagined communities'

Anderson's argument suggests that the news-media should be analysed as a facilitator and vehicle of 'the nation'. He suggests that the news-media accomplishes this by mobilising its technological and discursive technologies to create 'imagined communities', which bring people together through shared experience. This is achieved, Anderson argues, in two ways. The first – the technology of the print-media – meant that copies of the same newspaper, with the same content, could be distributed at the same time to people who were territorially and culturally distant. By compacting distance, and creating a simultaneity of time and knowledge, Anderson argues, the print-media created shared experiences across previously dissolute territories and people, which enabled the same territories and people to 'imagine' themselves as a community in national terms (Anderson, [1983] 2006).

At the same time, Anderson also suggested, the 'imagined community' of the nation was sustained and furthered by discourses of nation and belonging in the shared content of the news (Anderson, [1983] 2006). This latter action of the print-media has also been investigated by postcolonial scholars – notably, Homi Bhabha – who emphasises the nation *as a narrative* (Bhabha, 2013), which establishes norms of belonging and exclusion predicted on visions of 'the nation': themes of 'us' and 'them, of belonging, borders, territory, ethnicity, race and class, which seek to discuss, produce and reproduce power and sovereignty in normative national terms (Bhabha, 2013). Billig suggests that these narratives can be found not only in coverage that is ostensibly about 'the nation', but also in coverage of other topics, in which discourses of (national) (un)belonging 'flag the homeland' (Billig, 1995, p. 108). He terms this 'banal nationalism' (Billig, 1995). Alongside this emphasis on 'the nation' as narrative,

contemporary and later developments of 'media studies' also notes how the medium of the news-media influences its narrative activities (Ryan, 2014, Hall, 1997, McLuhan, 2001). With wide circulation, a broad public audience and a need to report information with often diverse connections and implications, the print-media relies on a condensed representational economy of stereotypes, symbolism and meaning-making (Pickering, 2004). Though it nominally reports reality, news-media stories must therefore be understood as 'mediated', as must their representations of 'the nation' and those related to it (McLuhan, 2001). However, this is not to say that news-media representations do not have 'real-life' impact; rather, it is to note the very opposite: that because media representations of 'the nation' are imaginatively engaging, because they are so embedded in media discourse and because they have a broad technological reach, they have a substantial influence.

Since the original publication of Anderson's argument, there have been significant changes in both media and social dynamics, which include: (1) significant technological advancement since the 1980s (2) the changing dynamic of the nation in the UK. The development of online and mobile technologies has radically altered both the way in which news media is produced and circulated (Appadurai, 1996) and the way in which media-bound 'communities' are formed. People are able to access the news through mobile and online technology all around the world. As a result, the news-media readerships, and the 'imagined communities' that they make up can no longer be said to be nationally or territorially bounded, but determined instead by one's access to the Internet. In terms of the second development, the complexity of nationality and 'the nation' in the UK, especially in a post-Referendum context, means that the borders of 'imagined [Scottish] communities' may be contested or open to change.

Rosie et al. have also suggested that analyses of news-media coverage might

look beyond the framework of ‘the nation’, and warn against an assumption that the ‘only way of imagining spatial relations is in national terms, when there is abundant evidence to the contrary’ (Rosie et al., 2006, p. 328). Hall argues whilst the framework of ‘the nation’ is a vehicle of community for the news-media, it is not the only ‘imagined community’ that is established. Rather, he argues, the media’s main sphere of influence is the ‘production and transformation of ideologies’ (Hall, 1995, p. 18). As such, the news-media’s production of ‘imagined communities’ must also be analysed with reference to other categories of inclusion and exclusion, such as of race, ethnicity, gender, class and other social categories. Whilst representations of these social categories might contribute to broader ‘imaginings’ of the nation, there is at times a tendency in analyses of the news-media to focus on narratives about the nation at the expense of a consideration of the impact of other ideologies. This has been notable in analyses of Scotland in the news-media, where a focus on nation-shaping has left other ideologies (for example, whiteness and patriarchy) underexamined.³⁹

In this context, the category of ‘voice’ appears to have become secondary to community; however, I would argue, this is not the case. Though the ‘communities’ facilitated by the news-media may be ‘imagined’ and imaginative, they continue to contain, include and exclude based on their norms and values. Higgins argues that news-media coverage is orientated upon a point of ‘deixis’ – a point of central representation – to which everything else in its symbolic economy refers (Higgins, 2004). This point of deixis – usually ‘the nation’ – establishes itself as the norm and privileges the categories that most contribute to its value. In the same way that other communities therefore create systems of belonging, exclusion, ‘imagined communities’ also establish conditions and limits of citizenship and ‘voice’. In addition, just as other

³⁹ With the exception of Coole (2002), who considers the intersecting, representative practices of ideologies of whiteness in Scotland-based news media

communities condition and *mediate* the terms of citizenship and ‘voice’, so too do ‘imagined communities’. News-media coverage functions through a condensed and highly representative symbolic economy (Pickering, 2004). Both ‘voice’ and belonging in these contexts are therefore strongly associated with their representative value and function – how they represent – ‘speak for’ (Spivak, [1985] 2010, p. 28) – the norms, values and categories of the community in which they occur. In this environment, practices and acts of ‘voice’ are practices and acts of heightened representation, whilst the extent to which a group or an individual ‘has voice’ depends on their representative ‘fit’ in the ‘imagined community’.

Though this conditioning of ‘voice’ occurs within the mediated context of news-media coverage, it has a far broader scope. Though media coverage works through a highly symbolic economy, it is nevertheless grounded in real-life, everyday events. Representations made by the news-media are therefore imaginatively compelling because they connect people with real-life events that happen in ‘the community’, whilst giving them narrative, shape and meaning. As a result, news-media representations of who belongs and who does not belong, who ‘has voice’ and who does not ‘have voice’ appear grounded in and associated with real-life experiences. As I will discuss below, news-media representations of minority-ethnic and Muslim communities in the UK frequently place them in opposition to or outside imaginings of ‘the nation’ and its ‘values’ (Solomos, 2003, Saeed, 2007). Drawing on Cottle (Cottle, 2006), Saeed argues that because minority groups in the UK are so often the objects of news-media coverage, and because news-media has the capacity to bridge a gap between everyday life and imagination, the news-media holds ‘a powerful position in conveying, explaining and articulating specific discourses that help represent (and misrepresent) minority groups’ (Saeed, 2007, p. 444). They also, I would add, hold a ‘powerful

position’ in the articulations of minority groups and individuals themselves. In the context of this thesis, I would therefore ask: to what inclusions or exclusions of ‘voice’ and community are Somali people subject in news-media representations in Scotland? To what extent do their inclusion or exclusion the news-media’s ‘imagined communities’ similarly occur in everyday experiences? To what extent are mediations of their voices and belonging applied in ‘real life’? And what effect does the news-media’s approach to Somali ‘voices’ within its symbolic economy have upon their ‘voices’ in reality?

5.2.2 Somali people and the news-media

Established Somali populations in the UK are the subjects of multiple ‘nation’-related discourses in representations by the UK news-media. Representations in the news-media often draw on three main themes: they associate all Somali people with ‘refugee’ status and mobilise discourses of borders and hospitality relative to their belonging to the nation; they emphasise their African roots and deploy racialised and colonial stereotypes; they note their faith in Islam and embed them within broad anti-Muslim narratives, which as I discuss below, have a particularly wide scope and influence (Saeed, 2007, Poole, 2002, Rashid, 2013). With reference to Somali people living in the UK, the news-media also deploys domestically-orientated stereotypes of Somali people – such as gang violence, high incidences of crime, drugs connections, unemployment and ‘benefit-seeking’ – that can also be related to the broader discourses above about their belonging and ‘the nation’ (Ansari, 2002, p. 4, Schuster, 2004, Travis, 2013, Muir, 2012, UK Government, 2009, p. 9). Coverage of events in Somalia, which focuses largely upon ongoing regional conflict, the terrorist activities of al-Shabaab, piracy, and the conditions of drought and famine in the Horn of Africa, also contributes

to how UK-based Somali populations are ‘imagined’, so that they are (variously) and represented as violent, extremists, dangerous, ‘backward’ and victims (Fangen, 2006). Researching media-representations of Somalis in a pan-European context, Klepp notes that since the late 1990s, media coverage of Somali populations in Europe has turned increasingly negative and focussed on the population as ‘difficult and conflict-producing’ (Klepp, 2002).⁴⁰ In the context of the UK, Somali-British journalist Rageh Omaar observes that since a failed second 7/7 attack on London by men of Somali backgrounds, the Somali population has increasingly been accused by the media of ‘exploiting’ and threatening UK hospitality and ‘failing to integrate’ (Omaar, 2007, p. 40). Writing in 2011, Mohamoud argues that the UK news-media continues to represent Somali people through an atmosphere of indistinct hostility (Mohamoud, 2011, p. 16).

Following these broad European and UK representative precedents, I give consideration here specifically to the Scottish context. To what extent does representations of Somali people in the Scottish news media continue or challenge these representative practices? To what extent are Somali people included in a Scottish ‘imagined community’?

- **A brief note on analysing news-media coverage of Somali people in Scotland**

Setting the parameters for an analysis of news-media coverage of Somali people in Scotland involves a number of choices. Online technology and a multicultural society means that news-media in contemporary Scotland comes from sources all over the world. In the meantime, traditional print-media has a range of UK provenances, including those based and published in Scotland (*The Scotsman*, *The Daily Record*, *The*

⁴⁰ Quoted in Fangen, translated from Norwegian-language article.

*Herald, The National*⁴¹), Scottish editions of rUK-based publications (*The Scottish Daily Mail, The Scottish Sun*) and UK-wide publications (*The Guardian, The Independent, The Telegraph, The Times*). Higgins has argued that amongst UK media, Scotland-based news-media employ specific ‘grammars of location’ that orientate their coverage primarily towards Scotland (Higgins, 2004, p. 636). For the purposes of this thesis, I therefore focus on Scotland-based print-media’s coverage of Somali people in Scotland.

- **Representations of Somali people in Scotland in the Scottish News Media**

Waleed and the group of elders found themselves frequently frustrated by the way in which the news media represented Somali people. They felt representations were almost entirely one-sided, so that - despite Somali people's efforts to settle and form community-minded populations - only stereotyped representations of Somalis made it into the news. Abdulkadir, one of the elder men with whom I spoke, comments:

*In ay ka dhigaan dadka soomaalida oo leh qof
mutacalima iyo qof wanaagsan leh ama
pirate bey yiraahdaan, waa yacni dhibaato
yacni kuwi anaga na dhibaateeyey ayey
anaga na raaciyeen.*

They portray the Somalis as uneducated people who cause trouble or they portray us as pirates. This is a problem. [But] the people who cause us trouble have come here as well.

Dinar adds,

the problem is, there's a lot of Somali community that live here

⁴¹ Though I considered coverage from *The National*, at the time of writing, no appropriate articles were available for analysis.

there's a lot of friendly ways, they work, they go to university,
they are good people, they are nice neighbours,
but mostly they [the media] pick up the bad stuff like pirates, and al-Shabaab
and you know, bad people and gangs fighting in Edinburgh

The men noted that in general, media representations of Somali people are negative and frequently stereotyped. A search for coverage within the last fifteen years concerning Somali people living in Scotland across the three major news media groups in Scotland (*the Media Group*, the *Scotsman Group* and the *Herald and Times Group*) confirms many of the men's observations. Alongside coverage of international events involving Somalia - which most frequently focuses on events involving piracy, al-Shabaab and kidnappings, drought and famine - and UK-wide reports - including scare-stories on Somalis as asylum seekers, criminals or extremists, coverage of anti-FGM campaigns and (qualified) celebratory coverage of the sporting achievements of Mo Farah - Scotland-based news coverage of Somali people in Scotland has focused on and reproduced many of narratives mobilised in media-representations of Somalis elsewhere.

Scottish news-media coverage of Somali people in Scotland since 2000 has focussed on selected themes and stories (see *Figures 5.2.1* and *5.2.2* below for a selection of the coverage). In the early to mid 2000s, news coverage about Somali people in Scotland focussed on their involvement in the Dispersal Scheme (Coole, 2002, Kelly, 2002). In the mid 2000s, the work of the Glasgow Girls campaign propelled (then) 15-year old Amal Azzudin into *Herald* Group coverage (Herald, 2005), which supported the Glasgow Girls campaign's efforts to end Home Office practices of child detention and dawn raids. The Glasgow Girls campaign also made headlines in 2012 and 2014, when their work inspired a musical and a BBC drama (Hill and Nic

Craith, 2016). Throughout the 2000s and 2010s, some coverage has been given to the anti-FGM work of Somali women (Herald, 2013, Stewart, 2016, Herald, 2009). In the meantime, Islam Feruz - a sometime Scotland international football player, who arrived in Glasgow seeking asylum in the early 2000s - frequently attracts the ire of the Scottish sports sections for his erratic behaviour (Scotsman, 2014, Fisher, 2012). In the 2010s, coverage of Somali people in Scotland has been especially occupied with the 2012 murder of Mohamed Abdi (McEwen, 2013, Rose, 2013, Herald, 2014, Leask, 2014, Williams, 2014, Alexander, 2014, Daily Record, 2013, Mathieson, 2014, McGivern, 2013). Coverage has included reports on the crime itself, the subsequent trial of the gang members and later 'investigative' reports on 'Somali' drug and gun 'culture' (Alexander, 2014, O'Hare, 2015). Coverage across the news groups has varied, according to their political stance and publication type, and Somali people were represented in different ways according to publications' narrative agendas. However, with some exceptions, coverage was notable for its widespread dissemination of negative stereotypes and narratives about Somali people in Scotland. I analyse and discuss the implications of these representations of Somali people below.

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10:27, 9 November 2014 By Derek Alexander

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Edinburgh gun death: Victim Central Mosque Imam's son



Mohammed Omar Abdi has been named as the deceased. Picture: Facebook

by GARETH ROSE

Published on the 28 May 2013 09:16

A MAN who died after being shot following a car chase in Edinburgh was the son of an imam at a mosque in the capital.

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Edinburgh gun death: Willowbrae residents speak out



Picture: Neil Hanna

by ALAN MCEWEN

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Court told of how Somali gangs are involved in drugs

Friday 16 May 2014

the murder of Mohammed Abdi in Edinburgh last year marked the arrival of Somali gangs in Scotland, a court has been told.

David Leask Chief Reporter

Figure 5.2: Headlines reporting the murder of Mohamed Abdi and his killers' trial. Clockwise from top left: Alexander (2014), Rose (2013), McEwen (2013) Leask (2014)

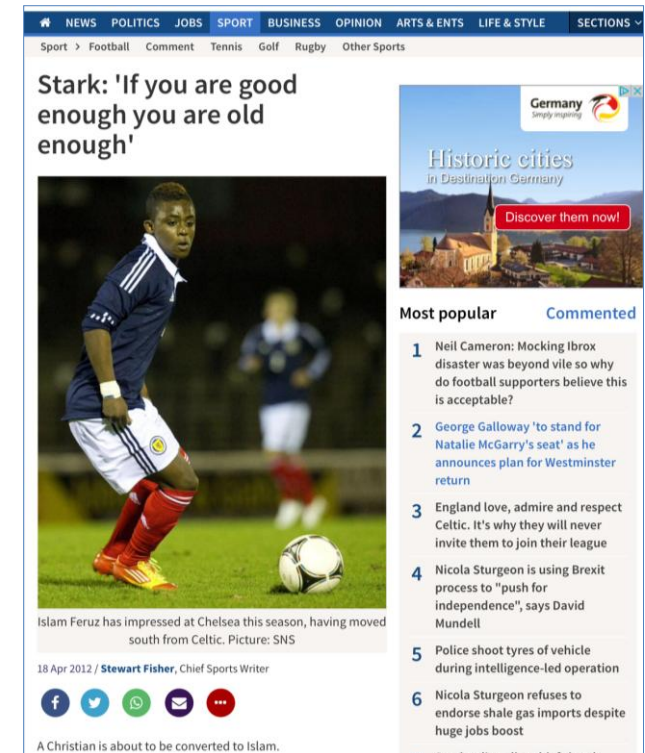
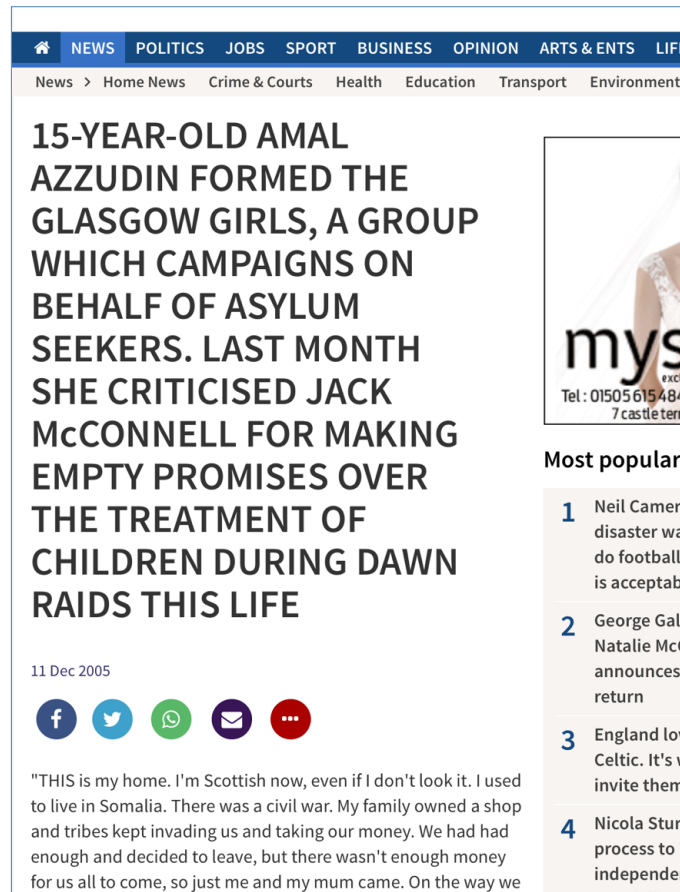


Figure 5.3: Somali people in the news media
From left: Stewart (2016), Herald (2005) Scotsman (2014)
Fisher (2012)

5.2.3 Scottish news-media narratives and stereotypes about Somali people in Scotland

As the selection of coverage about shows, news-media representations of Somali people in Scotland spanned a range of topics, including their migration to Scotland, community activism (the Glasgow Girls and the anti-FGM campaigns), football (coverage of Islam Feruz) and crime (coverage of Mohamed Abdi's murder). Unfortunately, within the scope of this thesis, an in-depth analysis of all this coverage is not possible. As a result, I have made a choice to focus on the coverage that was identified by many Somali people as exemplifying many of the issues related to representations of the populations – coverage relating to the murder of Mohamed Abdi in Edinburgh.⁴² In my analysis of this coverage below, I break-down the ways in which Somali people are represented, and then discuss its implications for belonging, community and 'voice'.

- **News coverage of the murder of Mohamed Abdi**

In May 2013, the murder of Mohamed Abdi in an Edinburgh suburb made headlines in the Scottish news (Alexander, 2014, Mathieson, 2014, McGivern, 2013, McEwen, 2013, Rose, 2013, Leask, 2014, Williams, 2014). Mr Abdi had become involved in a dispute over an alleged drugs deal with a group of Somali men from Glasgow. The night of his death, he had been hunted by the men through the capital and shot dead in the suburbs with a machine gun. In the weeks that followed, stories in the press tried to link the killing to an Edinburgh mosque (Mathieson, 2014, Rose, 2013, Williams, 2014), emphasised violent stereotypes associated with Somali people (McGivern, 2013, Alexander, 2014, Leask, 2014) and mobilised anti-refugee narratives (Alexander, 2014).

⁴² There is certainly scope for further analysis of media representations of Somali people in Scotland here. In the meantime, for a discussion of representations of the Glasgow Girls campaign, please see Hill and Nic Craith (2016).

A year later, the *Daily Record* explicitly connected the murder with the Somali population in Glasgow by running a particularly sensationalised article that recounted an 'investigation' it had conducted into Somali 'gangs' in the city (Alexander, 2014). This article made particular use of anti-Somali, anti-migrant and racist stereotypes. It begins:

AFRICAN GANGSTERS ARMED WITH BAYONETS ARE FLOODING
SCOTLAND WITH DEADLY CRACK COCAINE

IMMIGRANT thugs came to Scotland two years ago and have built a £1 million-a-year drug empire.

(Alexander, 2014)

In the headline alone, the *Daily Record* draws on and reproduces the same range of stereotypes identified by Dinar, Waleed and Abdulkadir above, including:

- **'gangsters'**: that Somali people participate in organised crime / that Somali people are criminals
- **'bayonets'**: that Somali people are violent / that Somali people use primitive technology / that Somali people are savages
- **'flooding'**: that Somali people are migrants / that Somali people are 'uncontrolled' migrants / that Somali people are faceless masses / that Somali people are less than human
- **'deadly crack cocaine'**: that Somali people are drug dealers / that Somali people are a drain on society / that Somali people are exploitative / a danger to society



Figure 5.4: Illustrative analysis of *Daily Record* headline

The article also draws on particular stereotypes and narratives about immigration to Scotland and the UK, including,

- **'flooding':** that migration is uncontrolled, faceless and en masse - a threat to Scotland
- **'immigrant thugs':** that (all) migrants are potential criminals / that (all) migrants are criminal *because* they are migrants
- **'immigrant thugs':** that Scotland's borders are unsecured and that poor immigration controls allows criminals to arrive / that Scotland is the victim of immigration

These two representations intersect with representations of race. The *Record* uses the term 'African' euphemistically for 'black'. As a result, from the very first word of the headline the Somali stereotypes and anti-migration stereotypes above are racialised:

- **'African':** noticeably 'African' and not 'Somali'. 'African' here is used to imply 'black' and enables the *Record* to euphemise racial stereotyping.

- **'African':** that all African people are black / that all black people come from the same 'place' and have the same experiences / that all black people are the same.
- **'African gangsters':** that all black people are gangsters/criminals / that all black people are violent/untrustworthy.
- **'African'...'flooding':** that black people are faceless masses about to 'overwhelm' white Scotland
- **'African... immigrant thugs':** that race determines migration paths / that all black people are the type of migrants (i.e. asylum seekers) who come to 'exploit' Scotland
- **'African... immigrant thugs':** that black refugees and asylum seekers are bogus/exploitative/a threat / abusing Scotland's hospitality. See also coverage that condemns Islam Feruz's decision to move from Celtic FC to Chelsea as a 'betrayal' of Scotland's hospitality (*Figure 5.2.2: Scotsman (2014)*).
- **'African... immigrant thugs':** that they are a threat *because* they are refugees *and because* they are black
- **'African':** that in Scotland, black migrants are refugees and asylum seekers / that in Scotland all black people are migrants / that black people are not Scottish

The *Record* notably does not refer to the Somali identity of the articles subjects in the headline. As a result, though the stereotypes certainly subsequently feed in to later negative representations of Somali people in the piece, there is a strong sense here that the Somali identity of the subjects is being used to further the *Record's* racially-charged, anti-immigration narrative. Racialised representations of Somali people also occur in other media coverage of Mohamed Abdi's murder. Like the *Record*, *Herald* coverage identifies Somali people simply as people in 'Glasgow's African community' (*Figure 5.2: Leask 2014*). In the meantime, *Scotsman* coverage associated the presence of 'six black men' in an Edinburgh suburb with 'Yardie' activity (Rose, 2013), a term used in the 1980s to describe the organised criminal activities of men of Caribbean origin in London. The term has little context in contemporary Edinburgh, aside from implying the connection between 'black men' and organised criminality, and making the

further implication that *because* the men are black, their activities are the same as all other black men's - i.e. criminal.

Other coverage chose to represent the Somali subjects of its coverage primarily and only as 'Muslim'. The following story was published in the days after Abdi's death:

EDINBURGH GUN DEATH: VICTIM CENTRAL MOSQUE IMAM'S SON

A man who died after being shot following a car chase in Edinburgh was the son of an imam at a mosque in the capital [...]

Mr Abdi snr was not at the Mosque yesterday but police spent several hours talking to staff in the building.

Police have said they are looking for six black men following the incident.

(Rose, 2013)

Like the *Record* coverage, the *Scotsman* headline makes no mention of a Somali connection until later in the article; instead, it frames its coverage of Mohamed Abdi's murder with reference primarily to Islam:

- **'Gun victim... Mosque Imam's Son':** the murder is connected to Islam / the murder is *because* of Islam (implications that Muslims are violent people / Islam is a violent religion)
- **'Mosque Imam's son':** that seemingly 'respectable' Muslims are not respectable / that the murder is connected to *organised* Islam-based violence (implications of terrorism)
- **'Talking to the staff in the building':** all Muslims are implicated in Islam-based violence

The framing of the article prioritises Somali people's Muslim identity over any other. It places Islam in the vicinity of violence to insinuate connections between the religion

and the act of murder. It draws on the anti-Muslim stereotype of Muslims-as-terrorists to imply a narrative of anti-Muslim tautologies: that Abdi was murdered *because* he was Muslim, *because* Muslims are violent. The Somali ethnicity of its subjects is therefore of secondary concern to the *Scotsman*. Its primary concern is to present a hostile narrative about Islam and its relationship to the ‘Edinburgh suburbs’, however, this does not prevent it from racialising its representations through an emphasis on the perpetrators as ‘six black men’.

Other coverage both about Mohamed Abdi’s murder and about Somali people in Scotland sought to situate their Muslim rather in largely negative narratives about Islam. This occurred in the most banal coverage: for instance, in a sports article about (Somali-Scottish) footballer, Islam Feruz replacing (white, Scottish) Christain Dailly to become the youngest starter for Scotland, the *Herald* quips ‘a Christian is about to converted to Islam’ (Fisher, 2012; see Figure 5.4). Whilst the quip is light-hearted, it can be associated with more hostile narratives about ‘Muslims’ ‘threatening’ the ‘Christian’ UK, and should certainly be seen in the context of largely hostile attitudes towards Feruz in the Scottish press. In the meantime, as a Somali participant observed to me, there is little coincidence that the violent imagery in the *Record*’s ‘AFRICAN GANGSTERS’ article is used to represent Somali people, whom it frequently associates with Somali ‘Islamic’ extremists, al-Shabaab.

5.2.4 The communicative consequences of media (mis)representation

In the coverage of Mohamed Abdi’s murder above, news-media coverage inserts Somali people into its symbolic economy so that they become ‘representative’ of values and categories that ‘belong’ to or are excluded from the norm. This creates and sustains a narrative about who belongs, how they belong and to what they belong, as I discuss in

Part 5.2.5 below. However, they also create and sustain parallel narratives about the extent to which Somali people can be considered ‘citizen’, the conditions in which they ‘have voice’ in Scotland, and what Somali voices represent. As the discussion above demonstrates, these conditions are created through a focus of specific categories of representation, including:

- **Racialised representations**, in which Somali people are ‘marked’ outside the racial norm. These representations seek to maintain control and domination over those marked as racial ‘outliers’ (Gunaratnam, 2013) in two ways: complete exclusion, or inclusion on tightly conditioned terms. Narratives achieve the former – exclusion – by reproducing the ‘visual economy’ (Ahmed, 2000, p. 21) of whiteness, in which visible features – such as skin colour, or religious dress – are used to confirm and further perpetuate people of colour’s exclusion from the white norm. Thus excluded in racialised terms, Somali people are not ‘heard’ when they speak. Narratives achieve the latter – erasure – by insisting upon Somali people’s status as objects of whiteness, without subjectivity or voice. If their voices are included within media-coverage, they are included in terms that continue to present them as objects. Inclusion only according to these terms, Yancy argues, is nothing short of ‘erasure’ (Yancy, 2008, p. 81).
- **Anti-migrant representations** mark out the borders of citizenship on racial, ethnic, national and naturalised grounds. They remind the reader that the subject’s citizenship is conditional on the hospitality of State and subject to censor (de Genova, 2002). They imply that the subject can never claim full citizenship and link

citizenship to a 'right' to the public sphere and suggest that the voices of those with refugee backgrounds will always be conditional and never achieve 'full' citizenship.

- **Gendered representations** interact with racialised, anti-migrant, anti-Muslim narratives. For instance, in the *Record* coverage, the implied male gendering of 'African gangsters' and 'immigrant thugs' adds to sense of threat that the subjects present. In the violent imagery of the headline, Somali men are 'imagined' as hypermasculinised: imagery that intersects both with the 'flooding' immigration stereotype to emphasise the increased threat of their 'uncontrolled' masculinity, and with racist stereotypes about black ('African') men to threaten their 'potency'. The *Scotsman* article's emphasis on 'six black men' similarly plays to these stereotypes. At the same time that the articles present intersecting gendered stereotypes about Somali men, they also set the male gender in a normative position. Somali *men*, the coverage above implies, are the (only) Somalis coming to Scotland and presenting a 'threat'; Somali *women* are simply not considered, nor featured in any way in any of the coverage of the incident. In coverage outwith Mohamed Abdi's murder, coverage of Somali women's work on anti-FGM project frequently presents them as 'victims'. In this coverage, the extremes of gender fixity are combined with racialised and anti-migrant scripts to remove Somali people from communicative spaces: men are associated with racialised hypermasculinity and seen as threats, are denied access, whilst women are seen as 'helplessness' and associated with 'speechlessness' (Malkki, 1996).
- **Anti-Muslim representations** attempt to confirm an ideological binary between 'the West' and Islam (Said, 1977). Binary oppositions not only call citizenship and

inclusion into question, but also the very frameworks through which Muslims speak. As an ideological 'Other', Muslims are seen as perpetual, threatening outsiders, and their voices are represented and 'heard' only under these conditions. Furthermore, not only are Muslim people represented in the same 'Othering' terms, they are also are represented as (all) 'the same' (Akbarzadeh and Smith, 2005, Saeed, 2007, p. 452). Writing on his own experiences of UK media-representations of Muslims, Somali-British journalist Rageh Omaar comments:

throughout my adult life [...] I have seen Muslims represented only in broad brushstrokes: in articles about fundamentalism; in speeches about the need for reform; in news broadcasts on secularism versus religion; on the clash of civilisations, of good versus evil. The voice of the individual has been lost and without it nothing is understood

(Omaar, 2007, p. 214)

Omaar argues that news-media representations of Muslims wilfully 'forget' that Muslims are also people with diverse views, experiences and voices. Without care for the individual, he argues, all nuance is lost.

In the coverage above, Somali people are largely excluded from the news-media's 'imagined communities' on the basis of the social categories and values they are seen to represent. As a result of these exclusions and conditionings, Somali voices are imagined only in terms of the racialised, migrant, Muslim and gendered categories that they are seen to 'represent'. Within the mediated context of the news-coverage, these representations place limitations and conditions on the extent to which Somali people(are seen to) 'have voice', and how they (are seen to) 'have voice' in Scotland.

As I begin to discuss below, and explore in more detail in Part 5.3, they also have significant real-life consequences for Somali people in Glasgow.

5.2.5 Representing Somali people and 'the nation' in Scotland

In the news coverage above, Somalis people are frequently represented in opposition to the dominant norm. However, though this norm dominates the terms in which Somali people are represented and in which they speak, it is rarely overtly articulated; rather it remains 'present and unnoticeable' (Higgins, 2004, p. 109), especially when set against Somali 'visibility'. In the coverage above, I would suggest this norm orientated towards ideas of a 'Scottish nation' that are strongly informed by ethnic and territorial citizenship, and which privilege systems of whiteness.

For instance, the *Record's* 'AFRICAN GANGSTERS' article (Alexander, 2014) establishes a 'locative grammar' (Higgins, 2004, p. 636) that centres upon the area of the Gorbals, which is pictured and referenced in the article. The Gorbals is a historically working class area of Glasgow, which in recent years has seen an increase in minority ethnic and migrant populations (Poole and Adamson, 2008). The article uses the setting of the Gorbals to imply that Somali 'gangsters' are threatening 'working class' inhabitants, who are racialised as white. The 'locative grammar' of the Gorbals gives the racialised, anti-migrant, anti-Muslim narratives that suggest Somali people 'do not belong' a focus: Somali people 'do not belong *here*'. Something similar occurs in the *Scotsman* coverage above, which strongly 'infers' (Hall, 1995) on ethnic and racial grounds that the 'English'-sounding, black masculinity of Somali men in the middle-class Edinburgh suburb is incongruent and does not 'belong' in the area (McEwen, 2013). The interactions between whiteness, class, ethnicity and the 'locative grammar' of the coverage focus on an 'imagined' Scottishness that is informed by an ethnic

nationalism, in which white Scots are 'imagined' to have dominant belonging, and are established as the stewards and protectors of 'the nation' and its boundaries.

The representation of Somalis as the antithesis of the 'Scottish nation' in the above news-media coverage follows a precedent widely observed in the UK news-media. Poole notes that Muslim populations in the UK have increasingly been portrayed as 'threats' to 'British values' (Poole, 2002, p. 20). Others also observe a broad trend in the media since the early 2000s that presents Muslims as 'un-British' or the antagonists of the British nation (Poole, 2002, Saeed, 2007, p. 445, Ansari, 2002). Solomos suggests that this particular focus on Islam as the antonym of the 'British nation' follows an already-established practice of the news-media that has long-suggested that minority ethnic populations '[endanger] the cultural and political values of the nation' (Solomos, 2003, p. 186). Categorised simultaneously as 'black', 'African' and Muslim, Somali people are used by the Scottish news-media to provide wholesale representational opposition to the idea of the white, Christian nation. In this context, though Somali people are represented as a 'threat' to the territory, values and culture of 'the nation', they are in fact also being placed in opposition to the values and cultures of whiteness. Drawing on her own experiences, nineteen-year-old Idil argued that the close association of the Scottish 'nation' with whiteness presented barriers to Somali people's inclusion in Scotland. She comments,

I've seen children say they are **Scottish**, some say they are **British**, and some that say **Somali**. And when I was like, *why do you say Somali?*, they say, '**we feel that we're not accepted**'. I think that before they accept us as **Somali**, they *have to accept that we're black*, from **Africa**

Idil argued that though progressive approaches to ideas about civic citizenship in Scotland were to be applauded, in reality, because Scottishness continued to be

racialised as white and Christian/secular, Somali people continued to be seen as not quite fully 'citizen'. I would suggest that news-media representations of Scotland as a nation that privileges whiteness enact the same barriers of belonging upon Somali people. For Ishmail, news-media representations of Scottish nationhood also raised questions of citizenship and belonging. Ishmail observed that he was often asked whether he identified as 'Scottish'. However, he suggested, in the context of continued misrepresentations of Somali people in Scotland, the question should be framed differently:

the question also is how the Scottish feel the Somalis are Scottish...
it's the other way round,
because before you can feel something
you have to feel welcome somewhere

Ishmail suggested that representations of Somalis in the Scottish news-media strongly implied that Somali people could not represent – 'speak for' (Spivak, [1985] 2010, p. 28) – Scotland. Furthermore, he added, because new-media representations sustain a narrative that Somali people cannot 'speak for' Scotland, it was very difficult for Somali people to imagine 'the nation' 'speaking for' them.

5.2.6 Having a say in the news?

As Idil's and Ishmail's comments above highlight, the way in which the news-media constructed Somali people in opposition to the 'imagined community' of the Scottish nation crossed into the reality of Somali people's communicative experiences. Furthermore, though Somali people were very aware of the effects of news-media representations on their lives, because the population is a 'minority' in Scotland, and

had no way to match the representational influence of the news-media, it was unable to break the representations exacted upon them. The group of elder men provide me with an example. Following Mohamed Abdi's murder, and alarmed by the implications that a small minority within the population had connections to the drugs trade, the men's organisation had tried to put in place measures to tackle any potential problems. Abdulkadir comments,

*Waxaa waaye dad aad u yar ciyaal yar yar a, oo
dhalinyaro yaryar teenager ayaa druga ka
shaqeynaya.*

*Kumuunitiga oo dhan maha anaga xataa waxaan isku
daynaa in aan la dagaalano oo anagaa isku daynay
xataa in aan poliska ku niraahno qabta, xataa waa
nalaga diidey in la qabto.*

And Waleed expands,

we really fight [the perceptions] in the community
there are only a minority of young teenagers who sell drugs
- which is influenced by other communities to be honest with you -
because - as you say - the Somali community doesn't allow them to do [drugs].
and we also contact the **police to deal with them**
and we did that **ourselves** to tell their families to hold their children **back**
from falling into drugs
but that's very minor, among a minority of people,
the media is always exaggerating

The organisation had tried to act to tackle any connections within the Somali population to the drugs trade in two ways. They had asked other members of the organisation to talk to their children to emphasise the dangers of any potential involvement in the trade. They also talked to the police at a local level, and at the time of my meeting them, were

organising additional sessions with Police Scotland. However, as Abdulkadir explains, despite their group's efforts to address the problems, and despite their relevance to the continuing press coverage of Abdi's murder, the group's activities went unnoticed. Without access to any of the news-media publications in Scotland, and therefore unable to directly address how Somali people were represented in the news-media, the men had hoped that their actions in the community would 'speak for' them. However, despite the hopes and activities of the organisation, news-media coverage did not adjust its representations of Somali people. For the men, the incident highlighted the continued barriers to 'voice' presented to Somali people by the news-media in Scotland. Without links or access to the news-media publications, Somali people had little narrative control over how they were represented in the press. At the same time, the representations of Somali people by the press frequently implied their 'voicelessness' and exclusion from both 'imagined' and 'real-life' Scottish communities.

The men's fears about media-related 'voicelessness' in Scotland were confirmed by a final incident relating to the coverage of Mohamed Abdi's murder. At the time of the murder, Hussain had been working for a government-sponsored intermediary that was trying to provide assistance to the people affected by the incident. To try and encourage balanced media coverage of the incident, the intermediary wanted to find a Somali 'spokesperson'; however, it had no links to the population. Hussain assisted the intermediary in their work, but was also unable to recommend a community representative. As a result, media (mis)representations of Somali people by the press continued unabated. Eventually, a (non-Somali) representative from the Edinburgh mosque was asked to make a statement instead. For Hussain, the incident aptly illustrated the consequences of news-media (mis)representations of Somali people: made symbolically 'voiceless' in news-media coverage, Somali people became literally

‘voiceless’ in reality – even to the extent that someone else had to be drafted in to speak for them.

Miller argues that in modern society, the reach of the news-media is considerable. As a result, he comments, it has an increased responsibility of representation:

[The news-media exercise] has the power to represent the world in certain definite ways. And because there are many different and conflicting ways in which the meaning about the world can be constructed, it matters profoundly what and who gets represented, who and what regularly and routinely gets left out; and how things, people, events, relationships are represented.

(Miller, 2002, p. 246)

In Scotland, news-media representations of Somali people actively contributed to the populations symbolic, social and commu(e)icative isolation from dominant Scottish society. However, as these representational habits have continued unaddressed, the Scottish news-media appears either not to have considered the implications of their representation of Somali people in Scotland, or to be unconcerned by them. A reconsideration of how the news-media represents Somali people in Scotland is urgently required, especially in an environment where the Somali population are a ‘minority’ and potentially vulnerable community. Van Dijk observes that in circumstances where minority communities remain isolated from wider society, the role of the news-media is additionally important, because it is often one of the sole categories that provides a link between the two (van Dijk, 2015). In Scotland, the news-media has not only failed to facilitate this link, but has added to conditions in which Somali ‘voices’ already face considerable challenges.

5.3 Mapping whiteness, Somali voices and the spaces of Glasgow City

Parts 5.1 and 5.2 have discussed how Somali experiences of ‘voice’ in Scotland have been shaped and affected by the different vocal environments to which they are subject. In both chapters, categories of ‘voice’ have been closely associated with ideas about citizenship and belonging; and the respective norms and values of the institutions involved (government, the news-media) have structured and mediated the ways in which Somali people can and cannot ‘have voice’ in Scotland. In both instances, Somali voices have been limited and conditioned by institutional approaches to race, faith, citizenship and belonging. In both instances too, Somali voices have been inhibited because Somali people have not had access to the terms of belonging and ‘voice’ to which they are subject. In this final chapter, I consider the extent to which Somali people experience similar exclusions of community, belonging and ‘voice’ in the spaced and placed environment of Glasgow City.

The association between ‘space’ and ‘voice’ is one that is commonly made. In discourses about citizenship, hierarchy and power, one’s capacity to ‘speak’ is often closely related to one’s access to public space: think, for instance, of how activist movements link their occupations of public or private spaces to the expression of their democratic ‘voice’ (Graeber, 2015, p. 100); of the role of ‘safe spaces’ (Hill-Collins, 2002, p. 100) in providing opportunities of uninhibited vocal expression for minority groups; or of how social privilege is often met with corresponding privileges of space and ‘voice’. In these experiences, the extent to which one ‘has voice’ is ostensibly associated with one’s access to material and physical spaces; however, as many scholars and activists have argued, experiences of and access to material spaces are often overlaid with the extent to which one has access to other forms of space: for instance, discursive space, audible space, social space, or communicative space (Ingold, 2011,

Back, 2007, Lefebvre, 2007). Somali experiences of the spaces of Glasgow City were multiple and varied. However, their experiences of public spaces were dominated by experiences of racism and social discrimination. Below, I discuss how Somali experiences of racist abuse in Glasgow must be closely related to their experiences of 'voice'. I note how instances of racist abuse confirm that public spaces in Glasgow continue to be dominated by whiteness. I argue that Somali people's experiences of material public space as hostile, controlled or surveilled speak of the dominance of whiteness across multiple categories of space. Finally, I consider the implications of the dominance of whiteness in Glasgow's public spaces for Somali voices in the city.

5.3.1 Yusra's experience

At the time we spoke, Yusra had lived in Glasgow for twelve years and has grown up in the city. In her late twenties, she worked with an organisation that runs workshops and activities for primary-school children. Yusra felt that anti-Muslim attitudes and anti-refugee attitudes in the press and in politics had a broad and everyday impact on her life in Glasgow; she also experienced direct racist abuse in Glasgow, though, she thought, with a little less frequency than when she first arrived. Of these experiences, one particular incident that occurred on public transport stood out. Yusra explains:

one time, I was on the bus

and this five year old saw me

and so asked his mum

if I had a **bomb** in my bag...

and I remember thinking,

I don't know how to react here

what do you do in this position...

...you know?

a **FIVE YEAR OLD** just saw me,
saw the skin colour,
saw the headscarf
and thought
*ok, yeah I'm making that
association*

The child 'reads' Yusra's headscarf and skin colour as indicators that she is a 'terrorist'; he also 'reads' her skin colour as 'marking' her as out of place, as anomalous. In the moment that the child 'reads' Yusra in this manner, the same racialised, anti-Muslim stereotypes and discourses that are embedded in the news-media's 'imagining' of Muslim and Somali people are mobilised to account for and regulate Yusra's presence on public transport. In combination with these scripts, Yusra is also inscribed on the racialised grounds of citizenship and migration. The child sees her skin colour as marking her as 'not of this place', as having entered a space of which he (and other white passengers) have stewardship, and of which she does not. On account of this reading of her skin colour, Yusra is understood as (an unwelcome) 'guest' in this space, as not citizen, and with racial, ethnic and bordered conditions and restrictions on her 'inhabitation' (Ahmed, 2000) there.

Yusra's experience demonstrates how anti-Muslim, racist and anti-migrant discourses take on situated and spatial qualities with very grounded consequences for the people on whom they are inscribed. Yusra experiences the scripts not only in terms of their 'imagined' or representational qualities, but also in terms of the place and environment in which they are inscribed. She associates the experience with the enclosed, physical space of the bus on which it occurs, with the physical proximity with the child and his mother, and with the route and locations of the city through which the bus was moving when the incident occurred. She also associates the incident with the

environment created by habits, actions and attitudes of the people on the bus (including herself and the child), with experiences of sound and language, and her emotive response. Yusra's experience, anchored to the material space of the bus but embedded in many other categories of space, is imbued with whiteness - a 'background experience' (Ahmed, 2007, p. 149) - 'white noise', even (Jeyasingham, 2012) - that nevertheless seeks to 'orientate' and 'mark' her body as an 'outlier' (Gunaratnam, 2013). In the white space of this environment, Yusra is of interest only as a surface, which can be inscribed with discriminatory narratives that reaffirm white dominance. For Yusra, the physical spaces of the city in which the incident occurs - the bus, the route, the particular city locations - become associated with the experience of white space.

In this environment, the conscription of Yusra's body by whiteness has direct and immediate consequences for her voice. As a person, she is flattened-out, made an object of whiteness, her subjectivity discounted and overwritten, her capacity to create her own narrative outwith the terms of whiteness disregarded. She experiences the erasure and reacts against it:

... I just thought,

I need to speak to school kids,

I need school kids to ***see me***

and to see that I do not have a fricking ***bomb***

in my ***bag***

In Yusra's experience, the relationship between different 'species' of space (Perec, 1997) - the physical and material space of the bus, the located space of its journey across the city, the phenomenological space of whiteness and 'white noise' - culminate in the attempted erasure of Yusra as a speaking subject. Though this particular encounter

stands out in Yusra's memory because of the age of the child, it is not an isolated incident; nor - as I will discuss below - is it an isolated incident amongst the experiences of other Somali people in Glasgow.

5.3.2 Species of space in Glasgow

Yusra's experiences above are embedded in multiple categories of space. Her experience is contained within and shaped by the material boundaries of public transport; however, it is also embedded in the audible spaces of the boy's conversation with his mother, the emotive space of Yusra's reaction and the discursive spaces of whiteness. In her experience, these categories of space combine to act upon Yusra's voice: material erasure becomes social erasure, which becomes subjective erasure, which becomes vocal erasure. In her experience, space and 'voice' have a clear relationship; however, the mechanisms, interactions and environments that inform this relationship are sometimes obscured. How then, do Somali people's experiences in the material spaces of Glasgow City relate to their communicative experiences?

The space of the city initially appears to be made up of material, located and situated categories of space. In this context, one's experience of the city can be understood in terms of how one's movements and activities are related to and organised by the built environment (De Certeau, 1998). In this space of material experience, one's own material qualities therefore also come under consideration (Ahmed, 2000). How does material space act upon the body? How does one occupy material space? These questions quickly dispel any notion of the material space of the city as a 'neutral' category; rather, they highlight how, with control over access and movement, the built environment is already political. Ahmed agrees: she argues that space is not simply something that 'happens' to people; rather people happen to space. Space is established

and made meaningful through people's activities and practices, occupations and inhabitations. Spaces do not define people, Ahmed suggests, people define spaces (Ahmed, 2000) (see *Figure 5.6* below).



*Figure 5.6: Glasgow's 'People make Glasgow' sign echoes Ahmed's observations above. Photograph taken at the 2015 *Stand Up to Racism* rally*

In the space of the city, Ahmed suggests that the concept of 'neighbourhood' should not be simply defined in terms of its location or urban infrastructure, but also in terms of the embodied 'inhabitations' of its residents. Over time, she suggests, the repeated 'inhabitations' of the people who occupy the neighbourhood create a precedent of who 'inhabits' space and how they inhabit it: urban neighbourhood might therefore be defined as an 'established as a way of moving through space', (Ahmed, 2000, p. 31), or a habit that has become a habitat. Lefebvre also defines space as a phenomenological category. People's actions, Lefebvre argues, create rhythms, melodies and harmonies that interact with the physical and material environments of the city to give them meaning and purpose (Lefebvre, 2007). De Certeau also understands 'space' in terms

of the interaction between people's practices and the materiality of the environment in which they occur. He observes that though the material space of a city controls and directs a person's movements through its streets and buildings, it gains meaning and purpose through the manner in which people practice their lives within, around, because of or despite this environment (De Certeau, 1998).

The scholarship of Ahmed, de Certeau and Lefebvre suggests that though urban spaces might initially be thought of solely as material spaces, they are as much constituted by their inhabitants and their embodied 'inhabitations' as they are by their material infrastructure. Furthermore, the role of the body and its activities in urban space means that the space of the city cannot be understood as 'fixed' but as constituted phenomenologically – through embodied experience. The involvement of the body in the constitution of space therefore opens up possibilities for multiple categories of space in one environment: for instance, 'embodied action' might refer to a multitude of activities, including the body's material occupations, its audible activities, its visual activities, its locomotive activities or its emotive activities (Ingold, 2011, Back, 2007). Of course, as 'voice' is an embodied act (Cavarero, 2005), this also raises the possibility of the creation of vocal space.

However, just as material space is not a neutral category, phenomenologically-constituted space is also not neutral. Ahmed notes that because spaces are maintained through embodied 'inhabitations', they take on the dominant patterns of how they are inhabited (Ahmed, 2000, p. 31). As a result, if particular bodies are seen to 'inhabit' particular locations, these locations therefore become associated with these bodies. In this way, Ahmed argues, spatial norms are created, which appear fixed to the material spaces and locations in which they occur, and become associated with social norms that share similar priorities of exclusion and belonging (Ahmed, 2012). For instance, in the

material spaces of the city, whiteness functions in a similar way to how it functions in discursive spaces: prioritising a visual economy, it marks bodies as ‘out of place’ according to how it reads their surfaces, and subjects them to a programme of control and subjugation. When I have discussed the function of whiteness elsewhere in this thesis, I have mostly been speaking in a figurative manner; however, in the spaces of the city, the way in which whiteness seeks to ‘mark’ and remove people from space takes on very literal and often violent qualities.

In addition, understood as embodied and ‘inhabited’, space has a strongly social quality: as such one’s occupation of space allows one to socialise, to ‘speak’ and to ‘have voice’. Similarly, the removal of one from public space removes one’s capacity to ‘speak’ there. This has both practical implications – if cannot access public space, to what extent can one be heard? – and political implications – if one is removed from public space, what does that say about one’s belonging in the city? As an embodied act, one’s ‘voice’ is subject to the spatial regulations and restrictions placed on the material body. As an embodied act, one’s voice is subject to the symbolic violences and exclusions enacted upon the body. The extent to which one (does not) have space to speak in the city must therefore be connected to the extent to which the city considers one as ‘citizen’. Below, I consider the implications of this relationship between ‘voice’ and the space of the city for Somali experiences in Glasgow.

5.3.3 Somali experiences of white space in Glasgow

Somali people's experiences of space in the city are mobilised differently according to a person and the situation and environment in which they are placed. However, whilst spaces in the city were individually experienced, there were some common factors amid their differences. Though it was not always or unanimously the case, civic and public

spaces in the city were seen as sites in which racism was likely, whilst the spaces themselves were understood as being informed and dominated by whiteness. Confirming Ahmed's observations above, Somali people found that in public spaces, whiteness worked initially on a visual economy. Based on the appearance of the body or the surface – skin colour, physical appearance – whiteness frequently saw Somali people as 'out of place' in the material spaces of the city, and often reacted violently and abusively to their presence. Below, I discuss the communicative consequences of these experiences.

- **Experiences of gendered anti-Muslim attitudes in Glasgow**

Anti-Muslim abuse in Glasgow's public spaces was widely reported by those with whom I spoke. Both men and women experienced anti-Muslim abuse based on what whiteness saw as visual markers of Islam. Women of all ages who wore headscarves were especially targeted for abuse. Young men with beards also experienced anti-Muslim attitudes. In these experiences, Somali people were threatened and abused for occupying public space in Glasgow. Abuse took multiple forms, and often intersected with other visually identifiable categories, such as gender. Seventeen-year-old Ifrah recalls an incident that happened to her on her way to school.

I had an incident yesterday actually:

I was going to school

and he moves

out

and I walked to the

side

and he came and basically

pushed me

to the side

for no apparent reason... uhuh!

... and I nearly fell as well,

but I said nothing
because he was a guy
and I was too scared

Ifrah's account reminds Mariyam of a recent experience of a friend:

a friend of mine, she was wearing the face veil
and she was on the bus, and she was sitting at the window side,
and a car parked up next to the bus when the traffic light was on
and then he threw a bottle, a glass bottle or something [at her]
and it crashed the whole window ...
...she's alright now, but...

In Ifrah's experience and Mariyam's account above, the young women become objects of sudden and unprovoked violence in Glasgow's public spaces. Working primarily on a visual economy, whiteness identifies the young women as 'out of place' on account of their skin colour and their headscarves. Razack argues that in Western contexts, in public and populist discourses about Islam, the headscarf is used both as a symbol and as confirmation of Islam's 'Otherness' to the West: 'the veil', she notes, 'continues to symbolise East/West divides' (Razack, 2007, p. 4). In Glasgow, having identified the women as (Muslim) Other, whiteness seeks to punish, threaten or prevent their occupation of public space. Ifrah's and Mariyam's experiences are notable for the physical violence of their attackers. Perry notes Muslim women are especially vulnerable to anti-Muslim abuse because they are seen 'not [only] as some who needs saving but from whom the nation needs saving. Whilst the veil is taken as a sign of

submissiveness it is also taken as a sign of aggression'. [...They are] the terrain on which the 'war on terror' has been constructed, waged and legitimised' (Perry, 2014, p. 84). In Ifrah and Mariyam's experiences, the attackers respond to this representation of 'aggressive' and 'threatening' Muslim women with corresponding force. In the moment of the attacks, whiteness does not 'see' Ifrah or Mariyam as speaking subjects: neither Ifrah nor Mariyam are spoken to or given a chance to speak; rather their voices become secondary to the violent assertion of white (male) dominance.

Anti-Muslim abuse was also experienced by some men, especially those with beards (Amin, 2010). In his study with young Muslim men in Scotland, Hopkins also records anti-Muslim abuse as a common experience among young men with beards. He notes that a combination of skin colour and facial hair also acted as visual markers of Islam (Hopkins, 2004). The young men with whom I spoke encountered had not experienced the same level of physical violence as the women above; however, they had experienced a significant amount of physical and verbal aggression in public spaces. Abdullahi recalled an incident on public transport where he and his friend were misidentified by a white man as Afghani and (by implication) as Muslim. The man shouted abuse at the Abdullahi and his friend down the whole length of the bus. He accused them of being part of the conflict in Afghanistan and shouted that his brothers 'died' to 'give them freedom of speech'. Feeling sorry for the man, Abdullahi and his friend decided to get off the next stop and catch the following bus home. However, they were later contacted by police, who had received a video-recording of the incident from a witness. The case was taken to court and the man was convicted and fined.

Abdullahi's experience above is also an instance of how the visual economy of whiteness precipitates symbolic and physical silencing. In his experience, whiteness sees his skin colour and beard as markers of Islam, and 'out of place' in public space.

In this instance, Abdullahi's attacker reacts with physical and verbal aggression. The attacker frames his aggression in terms of 'the war on terror', so that Abdullahi and his friend also become the sites upon which anti-Muslim discourses about terrorism and Otherness are inscribed. Notably, by associating the 'war on terror' with a defence of 'freedom of speech', the attacker mobilises anti-Muslim narratives to specifically identify a supposed 'threat' to 'voice'. Here, the attacker associates Abdullahi's occupation of the space of the bus as a 'threat' not only in material terms, but also as a 'threat' in terms that constructs 'the Muslim' as an ideological Other to the 'values' of the West (Said, 1977).

- **Experiences of racist abuse in public spaces**

Abdullahi's experience above is also notable for the ways in which he, his friend are racialised. In the initial incident, the man associated Abdullahi's skin colour and beard with Afghanistan, and by extension, with Islam. Later, when the incident was picked up by *Daily Record* something similar occurred, Abdullahi and his friend (with whom the paper had not been in contact) were identified as 'Asian' (Silvester, 2014). Said argues that the term 'Asian' has been used by the West to racially stereotype and classify people from Arab, Middle Eastern, Central, South and Eastern Asian background in 'Orientalist' terms (Said, 1977). In recent years, Brah argues, the this figure of the 'Orientalist' Other has been 'reconstituted' specifically through the figure of 'the Muslim' (Brah, 2005, p. 169). In the public spaces of Glasgow City the white gaze frequently associated 'Muslim' identity with 'Asian' identity. As a result, because Somali people were often visibly Muslim, and because they had brown skin, they were frequently they were misidentified as Asian, and racially abused in these terms: Yusra observes,

its mostly because I am not white, and I wear a piece of material on my head, so I could be labelled as a you know... 'Paki,' kind of thing, even though I'm not Pakistani

Frequently misidentified as 'Asian' in public spaces, Somali people were subjected to associated racial abuse. I further discuss the implications of this misidentification in the sections below. However, experiences of whiteness in public space were not limited experiences of anti-Muslim abuse. Somali people also reported instances of racist abuse that focussed specifically their identification as 'black' and/or African. Sixteen-year-old Mohamed recalls a recent incident:

yeah like last week I was on the bus, and I was just on my phone, and this guy comes on the bus, and he was a bit drunk and that,
... and then he starts singing Lion King songs...
... and then sits besides me and says, 'is your name Simba or something?'

In Mohamed's experience, whiteness again inserts him into a visual economy in which visible features – such as his skin colour – are used to 'mark' him 'out of place'. In Mohamed's case, anti-Black narratives, informed by 'scientific racism', are used to assert that he is socially, culturally and racially inferior to the whiteness of the abuser and the white norms of public space. Jamiila recalls a similar recent experience:

Habaryar, seddex isbuuc ka hor, waxaan joogey mishiinka lacagta lagala baxo oo aan lacag kala baxayey. Nin wata eey ayaa iigu yimi. Eeygiisii ayuu iga hor keenay. Waxaan weydiistey inuu eeyga ilaashado, waxaan u sheegey inaan dooneyn inuu eygiisa I taabto. Wuxuu igu yiri in eeygiisa uu fiican yahay ee qofka daanyeerka wasaqda ah ahi waa adiga. Markuu ceydiisa dhameeystey, Ayaan ugu jawaabey – adigana sidoo kale.

three weeks ago, I was at a cash machine to take some money out. A man with a dog came to me. He directed his dog towards me. I asked him to look after his dog, I told him I don't want to be touched by a dog. He told me that this is a good dog and that I was dirty, a gorilla monkey.

... but when he finished swearing at me, I replied – *you too*.

On the street and on public transport, Mohamed and Jamiila are denigrated for their occupation of white space. In both cases, animal analogies are used to maintain white supremacy by dehumanising them – excluding them – from white space. On account of Mohamed's youth and on account of Jamiila's gender, whiteness sees them as objects through which it can assert its dominance.

In contrast, on account of their age and gender, older men were seen as threats in the white space of the street:

*Waxaad ku leedahay saameyn weyn bay
kuleedahay medelba macnaha, waxaa jira dheh
anaga dhaqankanaga marka maalinta yacni
markey tahay weekeen koo kale waa laysku
yimaadaa. Waan istaagnaa markaasaan ku
sheekeysanaa dibeda oo kale, arintaas waxaa
waaye poliska hadda wey barten laakiin markii
hore dhibaataan kala kulanay.*

Tell her we can see the effects. For example,
on the weekend we like to come together,
stand around on the pavement and have a
chat. The police now understand but at first
that was an issue.

Waleed takes up the conversation:

Yes, it affects... it affects big time cos I'm going to tell you this, in Somali culture in the weekend when we come together we stand on the road and we talk altogether

[the men laugh amongst themselves and at themselves]

and our voices are also very loud, and that is making people look
cos as you know Scottish people like a gab
but then they say oh, four five black guys on the road,
cos as you know there is a...
... a ... what we call a *perception* of four black guys standing over there,
they may be gangs or something like
that so then they go get them off the road
and sometimes they phone the police
and the police come
and you get problems with the police

Waleed explains that in Glasgow, it was normal for gatherings of black men in the street to be seen as 'suspicious', 'criminal' or 'threatening'. Here, their age, gender and grouped presence in the street was seen as a challenge to the dominance of white space. Waleed observes that in these cases, they are not 'read' in individual terms, but as an anomalous, collective surface-area that needs to be contained.⁴³ However, in the men's experience, whiteness does not only respond to their physical occupation of space; rather, it also responds to their oral and audible occupation of public space. In the audible space of Glasgow City, the men's accents, volume and style of communication also mark them as 'out of place'. In Glasgow, whiteness is not confined to physical, material or phenomenological space: it also extends to the spaces of active communication. Across all spatial experiences of the city the men were therefore subject to logics of

⁴³ I return to these experiences in more detail later in this chapter.

‘containment’ and ‘removal’ that carried the implication that men with black skin do not ‘belong’ on the streets of Glasgow: they are not ‘of that space’; they are from ‘over there’, they are not ‘from here’ (Mirza, 2009); because they are ‘not from here’, they have no place the streets; because they are ‘not from here’ their voices are ‘out of place’ in the public space of the street.

In all of the cases above, the experiences of ‘white space’ are anchored to and associated with physical spaces and locations around Glasgow City, and the forms of abuse to which Somali people are subjected are situated and informed by the environment in which they occur. In each instance of abuse or discrimination, there is a notable reaction to (and against) the occupation of a Somali person or Somali people in the respective places. If, as Sara Ahmed argues, ‘neighbourhood’ is established both by the way in which bodies inhabit its boundaries, and by *which* bodies inhabit its boundaries (Ahmed, 2000), the many and frequent reactions against Somali people in Glasgow can be seen as attempts to ‘remove’ Black, Muslim bodies from spaces dominated by whiteness. In the meantime, there is a strong correlation between objections to, censorship of, and violence against Somali people in Glasgow, and their ‘habitual’ movements and activities in the city (i.e. on public transport, walking the city). This includes activities such as socialising, having conversations, speaking languages. In the experiences above, it is not only the ‘visible’ category of space that enables inscriptions of whiteness, but also audible categories of space, including the sounds, voices, accents, volumes, languages and discordances of the city.

If community is established by the habitual ‘movement of bodies through space’ (Ahmed, 2000, p. 31), then the attempted prevention and regulation of Somali

'movements' in Glasgow can be 'seen' as attempts to prevent them from both being a part and having a part in the creation of community space. The inhabitations of Somali people in Glasgow City are seen as potentially re-inhabiting - or 'rewriting' - space previously designated as dominantly 'white'. In all of the experiences above, whiteness responds to this potential 're-inhabitation' of phenomenological and physical space with hostility, attempting different forms of erasure, occlusion and violence.

5.3.4 White space, interpellation and surveillance

If the reaction against Somali people 'moving through' the white spaces of Glasgow city is a consistent factor of people's experience of racist abuse and discrimination, then so too is the experience or feeling of having been 'marked out' in the spaces and places of the city.

In many of the experiences above, white space takes on an almost panoptic quality (Foucault, 2004), placing conditions, controls and regulation on Somali people's inhabitation of space by implying their ever-present visibility and parallel ubiquity of white space. Faarax experiences public spaces in terms of hypervisibility. In one of our meetings, we meet at a library and discuss how Somali people negotiate different spaces in Glasgow. Referring to our settings, Faarax comments, 'for me its like if I'm by myself in here, I'm not going to look for Scottish, I'm going to look for Somali as that we can make a group of Somalis'. Later in the year, we meet at an anti-racism demonstration in the city centre (see *Figure 5.6* above). One of the few people of Somali heritage in attendance at the demonstration, Faarax observed, 'Somalis don't protest. I came here today, but my mum told me that she didn't want to see me on the TV as the black guy being arrested'. Faarax experiences the way in which whiteness marks him as 'hypervisible' in terms of a surveilled threat - as a system that is constantly

'watching' and threatens any 'transgression' with punishment and violence. At the demonstration, the 'punishment' of being picked up by the police does not transpire, but the threat is enough to put Faarax on edge. As is evident in the experiences above, in other situations, the threat of punishment solidifies into verbal, physical and structural violence. One of the defining features of panoptic-styles of spatial control is that the combination of diffuse surveillance and threat of punishment makes those within the system 'self-regulate' their behaviour to avoid the projected penalties of transgression (Foucault, 2004). Many of those with whom I spoke experienced whiteness in these terms. Responding to her friends' experiences of racist abuse in the street, Duniya observes, 'its like when you go outside you really have to watch yourself... especially nighttimes... so when you're walking, you have to really watch yourself.'



Figure 5.7: Notice on Glasgow subway system, which rather panoptically asks passengers to surveil fellow passengers as it encircles the city centre (own photograph).

The sense of white 'surveillance' meant that many Somali people experienced Glasgow's public spaces as things that needed to be actively navigated. People with whom I spoke adopted a number of different strategies to do this, including negotiating, challenging and resisting white spaces in Glasgow. However, many people also adopted strategies of avoidance and non-attendance of public spaces. This often had a direct impact on their communicative activities and communicative participation in Glaswegian life. For instance, after Saarim experienced abuse on the bus, he felt unable to testify in court against the perpetrator. In Faarax's experience of protests in Glasgow, his friends and family chose not to attend for fear of being 'marked' and unduly punished. Though Mariyam was interested in local politics, she said she did not wish to actively become involved because of the discursive and physical violence she anticipated. In the meantime, as 'the street' was often the site of racist or discriminatory abuse, it also became the site from which people sought to remove themselves. Despite their dialogues with the authorities, the men's group found that they were unable to conduct their street corner 'parliaments' in many areas of Glasgow, and opted instead to take their debating inside to the organisation's cafe. Women of all generations saw public space in Glasgow as something to be (strategically) moved through in order to be able to socialise with each other at home.

In these examples, people had developed strategies through which they navigated both the public spaces and white spaces of Glasgow City. On account of the dominance of whiteness in public spaces, these strategies were necessary to keep people safe. They also allowed for the creation of alternative spaces in which people could avoid or circumvent whiteness. However, the dominance of whiteness in public spaces had enduring consequences, not only for the way in which Somali people 'moved through' or inhabited public spaces in Glasgow, but also in terms of their

communicative activities. Many of the activities associated with vocal, civic citizenship – for instance, participating in the justice system, protest, public representation and debate – were also activities in which Somali people were likely to be ‘marked’ as ‘out of place’ and censored. As a result, Somali people were less likely to participate in these activities, and consequently were less likely to have their voices included, or supported and amplified by the associated civic institutions. They were also less likely to forge the social connections and community links associated with the ‘inhabitation’ of public spaces. In this context, white space should therefore be understood as an active barrier to Somali people’s participation in civic life in Glasgow. However, the vocal conditioning and erasure experienced by Somali people above is not a byproduct of whiteness. Rather, I would suggest, it is the very point. Whiteness, Ahmed argues, operates through a system of interpellation (see Part 2.1), which by ‘hailing the individual’ simultaneously recognises them as racially ‘out of place’ and makes them subject to its own norms of representation (Ahmed, 2000). Ahmed’s work emphasises how whiteness-as-interpellation works on a visual economy. However, based on the experiences above, to this, I would also add the audible economy of whiteness. In addition, whilst I would not de-emphasise neither the visual economy of which whiteness-as-interpellation works, nor its consequences, I would also emphasise the very ‘voiced’ nature of the act.

Saarim recounts an experience at college, when a classmate misidentified him as a drug dealer because of stereotypes associated with young Somali men. He recalls:

Saarim: you know, like my classmates, sometimes they have like weird questions, like, ‘um do you know where we can buy drugs’, and stuff like that ... actually there’s a time that this guy, he came to me, and he was a bit drunk and he said... ‘gimme the stuff’, and I was like, ‘what do you

mean?’ and he showed me a bundle of twenties and he said ‘you know, you the guy with the khat’ and stuff like that [...]

Me: serious?!

Saarim: yeah. I was a bit shocked and I was like ‘no man, it’s a wrong number’ and the guy, you know, he ran away so...

In Saarim’s experience, whiteness identifies him as a ‘surface’ on which it can inscribe stereotypes about young Somali men. It ‘hails’ him not as a speaking subject in his own right, but as an object that can be used to further its own (discriminatory) objectives. Interestingly, Saarim remembers the experience as a vocally embedded one: he imagines the classmate’s misidentification in terms of a ‘telephone call’ gone awry, and himself as the recipient of a vocal ‘hailing’ that has ‘called the wrong number’. Saarim’s experience – and indeed the experience of others recounted above – emphasises whiteness as an action embedded in vocal practice – as the act of ‘hailing’ ‘the Other’ in racialised terms. In fact, whiteness-as-interpellation might be understood as specifically acting upon the voices of those it targets. The purpose of whiteness-as-interpellation is not to ‘hear’, give space to or give narrative access to those whom it targets; its aims are the very opposite: to ‘recruit’ and overwrite any potential vocal activities in its terms.

5.3.5. Being Somali in Glasgow’s public spaces

In public spaces in Glasgow, whiteness therefore regularly attempted to interpellate Somali people. The act of ‘hailing’ on which the process of interpellation relied targeted both bodies and voices in an attempt to control and contain Somali people’s ‘occupation’ of white space: interpellation, Ahmed observes, is a process of subject-making (Ahmed, 2000, p. 21). However, though the interpellative activities of

whiteness sought to 'make subjects' of Somali people in public space, the way in which this occurred was frequently based on processes of misidentification or partial recognition. Saarim's experience above is the only one in which a participant experiences racist abuse that specifically targets Somali identity. In Saarim's experience, anti-Somali abuse occurs at the hands of a classmate who knows his identity. More often, abusers would target Somali people on the basis of more general categories of discrimination. Yusra comments,

whatever derogatory terms there are, they'll come with that, its nothing to do with like Somalia... most of the time people don't actually know where I'm from, so...

Yusra found that the abuse she encountered never primarily identified her as Somali; rather, it focussed on the categories that foregrounded the visual economy of whiteness, with which it remained familiar – 'black', 'African', Muslim and 'Asian'. Frequently unable to identify Somali people as Somali, the interpellative activities of whiteness frequently deferred to categories of recognition with which it was familiar. This had a number of consequences, both for Somali experiences of public space in Glasgow, and for their experiences of (not) 'having voice'. As whiteness was frequently unable to identify Somali people in public space in specific terms, it instead identified them in as many familiar terms as possible. As a result, Somali people were often interpellated in layered and multiple terms, subject to intersectional violences. For instance, in Jamiila's case above, she not only experiences anti-Muslim abuse associated with her headscarf, but also racist abuse associated with how people 'see' her skin colour – as 'Asian' or as 'Black'. Made (at least) doubly 'Other' and twice 'marked' out of place,

the mobilisation of these categories compound Jamiila's exclusions from public spaces in Glasgow, and make her doubly as likely to be the subject of abuse – a likelihood enhanced again by the gendering of public space (see above).

Another consequence of interpellative misidentification meant that Somali people were frequently 'hailed' in public spaces in terms that did not fully describe their identity or experiences. In the experiences above, the categorisations, 'Asian', 'Muslim', and 'Black', do not allow for the occupation of space outwith or between these categories. Somali people are Muslim, but they are not 'Asian'; Somali people are Muslim and they could be racialised as black African: as such, they occupy at least two of these categories, but they occupy neither within the norm; nor do the categories fully account for their experiences. Led by the white gaze, these categorisations of Somali people in public space therefore 'see' them only in partial or fragmented terms. For instance, in Jamiila's experiences above, though she abused under the category of 'Muslim' and the category of 'Black', the scope of the categorisations themselves remain disjointed and distinct, and do not account for how she might be black *and* Muslim as a singular experience. By containing Somali people within categories that do not adequately account for their experiences, whiteness therefore further consigns Somali people to two-dimensional representation in Glasgow's public spaces. However, I would suggest, this is not all that it achieves.

Based on work with Somali people in Canada, Kusow suggests that Somali people find that multicultural classifications of race and religion do not account for their own frames of reference or experience (Kusow, 2006). Kusow quotes one of his participants who explains the dynamic:

Somalis are the first black [...] who do not speak English as opposed to the Caribbeans [...]. They [Somalis] are the first blacks who are not Christians. So

it is an African, non-Christian, it is an African and Somali. It is an African with a different religion and they are black

(Kusow, 2006, p. 544)

In the Canadian context, Kusow's participant explains, norms of 'Black' and 'Muslim' identity do not account for Somali experiences: blackness is associated with English-speaking, Christian people of Caribbean and West-African origin; meanwhile, Islam is not associated with 'African' categories. In contrast, Somali people are of African origin *and* Muslim, who do not necessarily have English as a first language, and do not 'fit' the categorical norms. However, whilst this in itself is problematic (as I discuss above), Kusow argues that it has further implications for Somali people because it entirely fails to account for their own racial norms and experiences. For example, though Somali people come from territories on the African continent, they do not necessarily emphasise a close association with 'African' identity; rather they might identify more closely with Somali-specific and Arab lineages (see Part 4.1). In fact (as I discuss in Part 4.3), dominant Somali ethnicity tends to be narrativised in opposition to the Bantu and African heritages of minority Somali clans (Besteman, 2012). As a result, Ajrouch and Kusow suggest, in diasporic settings, Somalis have therefore diluted their African identity and instead sought to mobilise a 'pan-Islam' belonging (Ajrouch and Kusow, 2007, p. 78).

However, in multicultural Western contexts, this mobilisation has not been straightforward: Mehri argues that in the UK, despite a precedent for Black, Muslim populations, 'Black British Muslim communities are still seen as strange newcomers, shuffling our feet at the welcome rugs of British Islam' (Mehri, 2015). In the Glaswegian context, there is some evidence that pan-Islam belonging remains institutionally stratified: in an article for the *Glasgow Herald*, Aamer Anwar critiqued

racial divisions that saw Black African worshippers excluded from full participation in the social dynamics of Glasgow Central Mosque (Anwar, 2016). In this case, where normative Islamic belonging was racialised as South Asian, though Somali people might identify primarily as ‘pan-Muslim’, they are nonetheless ‘marked’ as ‘out of place’ on account of their African origins. In the meantime, whilst Kusow’s research might emphasise a ‘pan-Muslim’ belonging, those with whom I spoke in Glasgow did not exclude their African heritage from their sense of identity. However, this in itself was also complex, as Somali people do not fulfill the religious, territorial or language-based norms of ‘African’ belonging discussed above.

These complex norms and racialisations of Somali people’s belongings therefore also have a considerable impact upon how they experience public spaces in Glasgow City. However, even as these experiences remain complex, situated and intersectional, white-led categorisations of how Somali people occupy public space completely obscure their complexity. In fact, categorisations as ‘Asian/Muslim’ or as ‘Black’ exacerbate and intersect with other racialised experiences. For instance: in the case above, in which Somalis might identify primarily as ‘Muslim’ but also experience racialised exclusions from Muslim institutions, a whiteness-led categorisation of a Somali person as ‘Muslim’ would obscure the racial exclusions they encounter at the Mosque. In the meantime, a whiteness-led categorisation of a Somali person as ‘Black’ would compound their racialised exclusion from Islam and disregard their self-defined racial identity.

Under the white gaze in Glasgow City, Somali people were thus subject to ‘hailings’ that saw them as doubly Other or as partial subjects, and extended the same categorisations to their occupations of public space. In the public spaces of Glasgow City, the white gaze sought to maintain its dominance over Somali bodies by containing

them only within categories with which it was familiar and over which it had control. Though interpellation can be understood as a process of ‘subject making’ (Ahmed, 2000, p. 21), in this context, whiteness had little interest in ‘making’ the subjectivities of Somali people in Glasgow. Within its racialised hierarchy, Somali people were seen simply as objects of its gaze. Of course, within this environment, individually and as a community, Somali people continued to negotiate the complexities of being Somali, being Muslim and being of African heritage. However, these complexities of ‘voice’ and belonging were outside the interest or frame of reference of the white gaze in Glasgow City, which remained interested only in how Somali people – as categories and surfaces – could speak for it.

5.3.6 White space, Somali voices and Glasgow City

Somali experiences in Glasgow highlight that whiteness continues to dominant the way in which public space is organised and occupied. Mobilising its visual economy, whiteness ‘sees’ Somali people as objects to be contained and controlled. However, though whiteness initially targets Somali people’s embodiments of material space, it extends its reach to other categories of space associated with body, including audible and vocal spaces. By targeting the body, whiteness therefore also targets the ‘voice’. As the experiences above testify, the instinct of whiteness to subject Somali people to violence and abuse has immediate communicative implications. In these contexts, attempts to literally remove Somali bodies from public space must also be seen as attempts to literally remove Somali voices from public spaces: if one cannot ‘occupy’ a space, one cannot ‘speak’ in it.

However, because ‘space’ extends beyond material categories, and because whiteness works through an economy that ‘sees’ bodies as primarily representative, the

actions of whiteness in public spaces in Glasgow have implications beyond the immediate contexts of specific interactions. In Glasgow, the mobilisation of whiteness in public space must be treated as embedded in broader narratives of community and belonging in Scotland. The terms in which Somali people are racially abused in Glasgow's streets are not unfamiliar: rather, they can be found in the news-media narratives that 'imagine' Somali people as antagonists of a 'Scottish' community. The interpellative disinterest in the complexities of Somali experiences is also not without precedent, and similar attitudes can be found in institutional approaches that fail to account for 'differences' or specificity of experience within Scotland's communities. In Glasgow, the racist abuse experienced by Somali people must therefore not only be seen as a finite and literal attempt to remove Somali people from public spaces. Instead, it must also be seen as the embodied and visceral enactment of broader structural and symbolic violences that question the extent to which Somali people can 'belong' and 'have voice' in Scotland.

Part 6: Conclusion

6.1 Seen but not heard? Revisited.

Early in this thesis, seventeen-year-old Duniya argued that Somali people experienced something of a vocal paradox in Glasgow. Seen but not heard, Duniya argued, Somali people did not ‘have a voice’ in Glasgow. She suggested several reasons for this: first, that issues with internal Somali infrastructures meant that Somali people did not have community representation in Scotland; second that a lack of external knowledge about Somali people in Scotland meant that they were not included in public life; third that any subsequent external considerations of the Somali populations rarely endeavoured to go beyond the ‘surface’. It has been the argument of this thesis that Somali people’s experiences of the hypervisibility/invisibility paradox is closely related to practices, cultures and infrastructures of ‘voice’. Drawing on decolonising, ethnographic work with Somali groups and individuals in Glasgow, the thesis has highlighted the association of Somali experiences of voice(lessness) with community. It has considered the impact of ‘internal’ and ‘external’ practices, cultures and infrastructures of community, both separately and – crucially – in combination. Tracing their separations, interactions and intersections, this thesis has asked, to what extent do these practices, cultures and infrastructures have dialogue? Indeed, to what extent is there space for them to have dialogue? And with what implications for Somali voices in Glasgow City?

6.1.1 Reviewing the thesis

These are the questions I have tried to address throughout this thesis. Following an introduction to the topics of this thesis in Part 1, Part 2 had two concerns: (1) how to develop research practices that foreground Somali voices, and (2) how to develop research practices that recognise and address the powers, privileges and complicities of this research. Beginning with a consideration of theoretical approaches to the concept of ‘voice’, in this section, I highlight how ‘voice’ facilitates processes of meaning-making and processes of socialisation. Discussing metaphysical, deconstructionist, and socially-orientated approaches to ‘voice’, I argue that ‘voice’ can be understood both as a communicative act in the ‘immediate’ social context in which it occurs. At the same time, I argue, ‘voice’ must be understood in the broader social context, in which norms of culture, race, ethnicity, place, nation, class, gender and language determine the extent to which one ‘fits’, and the subsequent extent to which one will (not) be heard. Though ‘voice’ is often presented as the social category to which everyone has equal access, I note its relationship to the norm means that it is implicated in hierarchies of power and privilege, which operate a sliding scale of access and ‘voice’. In this context, I consider the positions of power and privilege involved in this research. The *Cadaan Studies* movement situates ‘Somali Studies’ scholarship within a history of colonialism and white privilege and traces how research about Somali people (most often by white scholars) is complicit in the continued subjugation of Somali voices. Using this as my starting-point, I explore how the arguments of the movement might be situated in broader decolonising, anti-racist, feminist and ethnographic scholarship. I argue that a research project that is related to Somali people, and that is conducted by a researcher that benefits from white and institutional privilege, must develop research practices that respond to, address and make visible its position. In decolonising practices, I suggest,

questions of research ethics are also questions of ‘voice’, which both ask: to what extent might the research participate in violences, occlusions or erasures of those with whom it works? What can it do to address this? How might (in this project) research include, talk about and represent Somali voices with minimal harm?

I subsequently use these questions to frame both my fieldwork and writing practices. As a result, my work with different Somali groups and individuals in Glasgow developed practices of ethnographic participation, coproduction and reflexivity. Though my fieldwork was framed in terms of ‘voice’, I was led by participants’ definitions and experiences of the term, and thus became involved in a variety of social, cultural or community projects, events or activities. I mostly worked with ‘majority’ Somali groups, including a social organisation, a women’s group, a group for young people and a number of individuals of different ages, genders and backgrounds. However, I also spent some time with the Bajuni campaign, whose experiences of being a minority Somali group highlighted points of contrast in ‘being Somali’ in Glasgow. Throughout the fieldwork, I worked with people according to their particular circumstances and wishes. The fieldwork therefore produced projects, comments, and opinions of varying scales and scopes, which I used to inform the ensuing ethnography. In the written ethnography, I have continued the decolonising focus of my research practice, paying particular attention to the representation of the voices of Somali participants. In the meantime, though the thesis remains implicated in the institution of research, it has actively privileged sources, knowledge and critiques that do not reproduce a genealogy of power and exclusion.

Part 3 introduces the history and experiences of Somali people in Glasgow. Though it identifies some precedent for a Somali population in Scotland prior to the year 2000, it finds that the contemporary Somali population in Glasgow grew from

those moved to the city under the Dispersal Scheme. Led by the recollection and experiences of Somali residents, I discuss both the short-term and longer-term impact of the Scheme upon the formation of Somali 'communities'. Brought to a location a considerable distance away from an established Somali population, newly-arrived Somali people began to develop support infrastructures from scratch; however, without an established community, they were - and have remained - particularly vulnerable to other social and structural inequalities associated with life in Glasgow. Fifteen years on, many Somali people do not feel that the Somali population 'has a voice' in Glasgow or in Scotland. The causes and conditions of 'voicelessness' were often complex; however, many of those with whom I spoke related them to a failure of community both amongst Somali people and in a broader Scottish context. As community remained the dominant structure with which Somali people associated 'voice', its failure was felt to have significant communicative consequences.

In Part 4, I consider both the extent to which internal structures and social practices have been related to Somali community formation in Glasgow, and the extent to which they have impacted Somali communicative activities. In a consideration of the relationship between clan practices and community-formation, I suggest that though clan culture exists as background noise, in Glasgow it has not been mobilised into the political and divisive structures that have formed in other locations. Here, wariness of division within the relatively small population in Glasgow has so far discouraged politicised clan practices; at the same time, in Glasgow's culturally and geographically isolated environment, clan remains a 'culturally intimate' practice, which continues to influence commun(e)icative hierarchy, and the extent to which people speak or remain silent. If clan norms have some influence on commun(e)icative activities, so too do gender norms, as I discuss in my consideration of Somali women's experiences in

Glasgow. In a broad sense, conservative gender norms continued to exclude women from public positions in the community; however, this was not unanimously the case and women's generations, approaches to Islam and social backgrounds exerted strong influence over the degree to which these norms were felt and interpreted. Within gender normative community dynamics, women often developed their own patterns and practices of 'voice'. However, once again, their approaches were diverse and not easily classified: some women found 'voice' in the respectful defiance of gendered norms, others preferred to express themselves through traditionally gendered structures. Others still sought to negotiate a position that could speak to both approaches.

Somali experiences of clan and gendered norms within the population in Glasgow build a picture of people with a strong sense of belonging based on ethnicity, faith and experience. These experiences speak of a population for which the idea of community remains important but – due to combined effects of Dispersal and existing social and structural inequality in Scotland – has faced significant challenges in achieving this. As a result of these conditions, community infrastructure has not yet been realised and continues to be open to some negotiation. At the same time, despite a strong sense of Somali belonging, the practice of community in Glasgow remains subject to divisions caused both by community norms – such as clan, gendered and generational hierarchies – and by the renegotiation of these norms. Somali experiences of community in Glasgow were therefore defined in a paradox of cohesion and fracture, solidarity and fragmentation. In the final section of Part 4, I turn to the experiences of the Glasgow Bajuni campaigners, who do not 'belong' to majority norms of ethnicity and race. As a result, the campaigners do not feel they have access to the (limited) forms of community occupied by the majority Somali population in Glasgow. This has meant the campaigners have been unable to draw upon systems of support and solidarity

throughout their long battle with the Home Office. Moreover, their minority status has enabled Home Office claims that they are 'not Somali' and contributed to their marginalisation even within the asylum system. Like the majority Somali groups in Glasgow, the campaigners have found some 'voice' in practices of cultural solidarity; however, their situation remains particularly difficult. Their inclusion in this thesis highlights through comparison the relative advantages of belonging to a (Somali) community in Glasgow, even as it shows the limitations of community in sharp relief.

Throughout the chapters of the previous section, the influence of external and environmental factors upon Somali community formation increasingly emerged. Part 5 explicitly addresses the external factors most frequently identified by those with whom I worked as affecting both commun(e)icative practices amongst the Somali population, and also a broader sense of belonging and 'voice' in Scotland, namely: (1) government approaches to community; (2) media approaches to belonging and; (3) racism in public spaces. I note that government approaches to multicultural Scotland situate people's 'voices' within a framework of democracy and civil society. These approaches understand 'voice' in terms of civic engagement: of community formation, representation and participation within government 'community development' frameworks. The Somali people with whom I worked readily acknowledged the support they have received from 'community development' infrastructure in Scotland; however, they noted, this did not translate into civic 'voice'. Rather, I suggest, because 'community development' infrastructure does not take into account the community-specific practices, inequalities and infrastructures, it often also causes problems. Existing government-sponsored infrastructure often exacerbated internal hierarchies by perpetuating a cycle of (under)representation in which those with most social privilege were more likely to gain government support and raise their profiles, decreasing the

likelihood of similar support for those with less privileges. In addition, by asking that Somali groups perpetually associate themselves with their 'refugee' backgrounds, 'community development' infrastructure implied a limit to the terms of their citizenship in Scotland. Though 'integration' policies placed emphasis on 'dialogue' between dominant and minority communities, Somali people felt that, in their case, the responsibility for 'integration' - and the penalties for any failures - had disproportionately been placed upon them. Many of those with whom I spoke strongly advocated the need for increased dialogue between Somali and government representatives to improve both internal and external community representation and participation.

The penultimate and final chapters of Part 5 address the norms and limits of citizenship in Scotland and explore their communicative consequences for Somali people in Glasgow. Focussing firstly on representations of Somali people in Scotland in the Scottish news media, I argue that the majority of coverage about Somali people perpetuates racist, anti-Muslim and anti-migrant stereotypes. Led by the testimony of those with whom I worked, the chapter suggests that mediated representations of Somali people enable an environment that readily places limits on, confines and erases Somali people's real-life communicative activities. Moreover, by placing (mis)representations of Somali people in opposition to 'the nation', the news-media establish a narrative about the limits of Somali belonging in Scotland that relies on racist, anti-Muslim and anti-migrant discourses. The news-media is one of only a few institutions to bridge the gap between isolated minority communities and dominant communities. However, the almost unanimous representation of Somali people as the antithesis of the Scottish nation by the Scottish news media has only served to compound and perpetuate a sense of isolation and 'voicelessness' for Somali people in Glasgow. Somali people's frequent

experiences of racism in Glasgow's public spaces has added to this. In the final chapter, I consider the effects of whiteness on Somali voices in the city. I discuss how whiteness works through a visual economy that uses skin colour, clothing or other physical characteristics to 'mark' Somali people as 'out of place'. However, I argue, it does not only operate on a visual economy; rather, it also operates through other categories of space, including audible space, in which Somali people's voices and communicative activities are also subject to racialised regulation. Identifying Somali people as 'out of place' in the multiple spaces of Glasgow City, whiteness primarily treats Somali people as objects and disregards them as speaking subjects. In addition, it seeks to control and regulate their 'inhabitation' of all categories of public space in order to minimise their citizenship in the city. Somali people have responded to these conditions in different ways – by challenging them, strategically navigating them or avoiding situations in which they occur; however, whiteness nevertheless affects Somali people's access to civic spaces that would otherwise enable them to 'have voice' in Glasgow.

The arguments made in Part 5 emphasise that the conditions of 'voicelessness' experienced by Somali people in Glasgow are not solely the result of under-realised internal community infrastructure. Instead, Part 5 highlights the multiple spaces in Scotland in which Somali people face infrastructural and discursive barriers to 'voice'. In some circumstances, external conditions (such as 'community development infrastructure') have exacerbated existing internal inequalities. However, at the same time, external norms of belonging, citizenship and 'voice' in Scotland have either placed conditions on Somali people's inclusion in Scotland's 'community of communities' or actively excluded them from it. Though dominant discourses might accuse Glasgow's Somali communities of 'not integrating' or not 'participating' in

public life, these same discourses enhance conditions of isolation and marginalisation by not engaging with Somali people, by misrepresenting them and by censoring Somali people's civic activities. Though – as Parts 3 and 4 discuss – Somali people may face internal challenges of community and communication, their cases are not helped when their citizenship, belonging and 'voice' in Scotland are also constantly called into question, conditioned or erased.

6.1.2 Somali 'voices', community and communication

In this research, the question of 'voice' in Glasgow was quickly and closely associated with ideas about community by many people with whom I spoke. For many, (Somali) community encompassed two ideas at once: the first, of 'voice' amongst Somali people and of the cultures, norms and relationships involved therein; the second, of representation – of recognition as a community and involvement in the infrastructures that would enable this. In the first idea, community was often used to express a strong sense of connection between people of majority Somali heritage – an idea that expressed a shared culture, faith and history, all linked by ethnicity and lineage. In this sense – as Waleed explains in Part 3.2 – community is an idea that guarantees 'voice' through belonging: if one is majority Somali, one has a 'voice' amongst other majority Somalis. This is especially the case in a context such as Glasgow, in which other Somali people are in short and isolated supply. At the same time, the limits of this sense of community can be found in the Bajuni campaigners' marginalisation from majority infrastructure.

However, even within this idea of majority community, values of vocal solidarity were tempered by experiences of vocal fragmentation. Though traditional community infrastructure organised people's social and communicative activities, it

also created hierarchies based on norms of paternal lineage and ethnicity. Whilst many acknowledged that this caused communicative differences amongst Somalis, some felt that this was part of Somali communicative culture; however, others felt that it should be challenged or renegotiated. Somali experiences of community therefore not only involved the ‘differences’ caused by social and communicative hierarchy, but also subsequently involved the many differences of opinion in how to respond to, work with, challenge or accept these differences. For people in Glasgow, these experiences asked fundamental questions about Somali community – what did it represent? Who did it represent? How? And by whom? – that often meant that the representational role of community was open to doubt and negotiation. For Somali people in Glasgow, therefore, though on the one hand Somali community was a space of vocal solidarity and familiarity, on the other hand it was a site of total unfamiliarity and vocal uncertainty.

In broader public discourses in Scotland, ‘voice’ has also been closely associated with ideas about community. Underpinning ideas about freedom, equality and subjectivity, ‘voice’ is the concept used to make liberal democratic – and more latterly, multicultural – systems meaningful. As a ‘vote’, as citizenship, as ‘choice’ and as ‘agency’, ‘voice’ and its symbolic economy informs how social relationships are imagined and structured. In Scotland, principles of egalitarianism nominally place everyone on an even vocal footing (Arshad, 2008). In this environment, community has been imagined as the means through which the people’s ‘voices’ can be heard – a distillation of democracy in action. In post-devolution Scotland, and in an increasingly multicultural environment, the government has used community to define, structure and funnel people’s needs and experiences. In this context, citizenship is defined in terms of democratic participation and representation – acts both of community and ‘voice’.

Scotland's devolved relationship to the rest of the UK has also raised questions of how multicultural, liberal democratic, community-orientated 'voice' relates to the idea of 'the nation', and adds the limits of the border – norms of race, ethnicity, gender, class, faith and language – to the equation.

In her work with minority ethnic communities in Scotland, Netto notes that many groups clearly understood the implications of 'having voice' in civic, political and public infrastructure. She observes,

groups unanimously expressed a desire for greater representation in decision-making structures which impact on the allocation of resources, indicating not only their awareness of the role of the institutional component of nation-building, but their recognition of institutional cultures and the values of occupying spaces linked to power relations and surveillance

(Netto, 2008, p. 61)

I would suggest that throughout the chapters of this thesis, Somali people have demonstrated the same understanding of, and desire for, 'voice' in Scotland in these settings. However, and extending Netto's argument, I would suggest that Somali people have also demonstrated a clear understanding that involvement in these infrastructures is neither without conditions nor without consequence. Whilst community infrastructures in Scotland have provided the Somali community with the fundamentals of civic citizenship, they have also had impact and influence upon already complex internal crises of 'voice'. They have done so often without specific knowledge of, for example, how they enable cycles of under-representation, or of how they support particular types, sites and practices of 'voice' whilst discarding others. Without this knowledge, external infrastructure creates additionally complex communicative environments and fails to make provision for 'voice' outside its frame of reference. As

a result (for example), it demands that Somali people ‘integrate’ without hearing their offer of communicative hospitality, or it condemns elder Somali women as ‘voiceless’ without hearing their alternative definitions of the concept. In these cases, it fails to recognise its own role in these conditions.

Similarly, there is little recognition of how social context and environment might impact the Somali community’s capacity for participation and representation. There are certainly some practices and infrastructures within the Somali community that themselves present challenges for Somali people in Glasgow. However, as Somali people respond to, work through and negotiate these challenges, their task is made more difficult by external and environmental factors in Glasgow. In a post-Dispersal context, where spaces of cultural familiarity remain limited for Somali people, unfamiliarity and uncertainty is not easily embraced. Meanwhile, in an environment where everyday and institutional discourses tell Somali people that their belonging in Scotland is otherwise limited, a sense of Somali community remains especially important. By neither recognising the role of Glasgow’s environment in this dynamic, nor addressing the factors that contribute to environmental isolation, community infrastructure, policy and discourse impede Somali efforts to untangle the complexities of community and ‘voice’ in the city. In a more general comment upon Scotland’s multicultural environment, Meer suggests that though ‘it would be impossible to think of the identity of Britain without placing minorities at its core[,] something similar is yet to happen to Scottish identity’ (Meer, 2015, p. 16). This suggests, he notes, ‘that citizenship is not simply about a legal status but about the social and political field in which [...] minorities are confident and audible enough to participate in Scotland’ (Meer, 2015, p. 16). Somali experiences of (not) being ‘audible’ in Scotland emphasise that the responsibility for citizenship lies as much with government and public institutions as it does with the

Scotland's communities; however, Somali experiences also suggest that these same institutions have not taken on this responsibility to the extent that is needed.

Led by Somali experiences of (not having) 'voice' in Glasgow, this thesis identifies some clear areas for public institutions to address, including: improving education about, and understanding of, the cultures, environments, and specific social complexities faced by Somali people in Scotland; developing spaces for dialogue and discussion that involve communities in the creation of the infrastructures to which they are subject; and recognising and reflexively addressing the institutional complicities and discriminations that contribute to Somali people's experiences of 'voicelessness'. Consideration might also urgently be given to how news-media coverage might begin to include and involve Somali people both in its narrative and production. In the meantime, Somali experiences of racism, abuse and discrimination highlight the need for a public and publicised conversation about the role of whiteness in contemporary Scottish society.

6.1.3 Contributions

The overarching aim of this thesis was to create a cohesive account of Somali experiences of (not having) 'voice' in Glasgow. In doing so, it also aimed to give consideration both to the cultures, practices and infrastructures of 'voice' amongst Somali people in Glasgow, as well as to wider cultures and practices of 'voice' in Scotland. Through their respective experiences and in their interactions, I aimed to begin a narrative that would situate and articulate Somali lives in the city. With an emphasis across theory, practice, fieldwork and analysis, and grounded especially in Somali experiences in Scotland, I hoped to situate the thesis within the tenants of intercultural exchange: of community, of dialogue and of 'voice'.

Marking a development from the fragmented and partial pieces of knowledge and information that previously characterised narratives about Somali people in Scotland, this thesis provides a considered and detailed discussion of Somali experiences of life in Glasgow. Directed by Somali experiences over the last fifteen years, the thesis has developed an ethnographic account of the long-term consequences of the Dispersal Scheme, and its consequences for community formation, representation and civic ‘voice’. In a departure from other work about Somali populations in the UK, it has a strong focus on environment, and finds that the post-Dispersal environment, cultural and geographic isolation and socioeconomic disadvantage are all factors that have considerably shaped Somali experiences of community in Glasgow.

In doing so, this thesis also adds to a body of work about Somali populations in the UK. As the first instance of a sustained consideration of Somali population in Scotland, it highlights practices of community-making in Glasgow that are placed, environmentally shaped and culturally complex. Where environmental factors in other scholarship have largely featured as ‘background noise’, the Glasgow Somali population’s experiences highlight these factors as active and creative rather than concretised. Whilst other Somali populations in the UK unquestionably experience social and structural barriers, the Glasgow Somali population’s experiences emphasise factors such as historic settlements, existing community infrastructure, and geographical and cultural closeness as privileges of community that enable Somali voices. In this context, Glasgow Bajuni campaigners’ experiences as a ‘minority’ Somali group expose the limits of both ‘voice’ and belonging.

However, whilst this thesis has implications for work with Somali people elsewhere in the UK, its primary focus is upon the communicative experiences of people in Glasgow. I am hopeful that parts of this thesis are of some use to the

individuals and groups with whom I worked. I am aware that the thesis format is not the most pragmatic form with which these things might be discussed; however, I think there is potential here for further work in the future.

6.1.4 Conclusions

As a community that has been the subject of and subject to significant social change in Scotland, the Somali community has now been part of discussions about belonging, citizenship and ‘voice’ in Scotland for fifteen years. This thesis has argued that for Somali people in Glasgow, these discussions occur in both internal and external community spaces. Internal Somali approaches to the question of ‘voice’ closely associated its qualities with community; however, as the experiences in this thesis attest, internal approaches to community caused as many commun(e)icative fragmentations as it did cohesions. Externally, Somali voices were also subject to – and often placed at the limits of – approaches to civic, national and everyday belonging in Scotland. Somali people’s experiences of ‘voice’ expose the impacts, limits and failures of dominant imaginings of citizenship and belonging in Glasgow; they also highlight spaces of vocal potential in Scotland.

In the introduction to this thesis (Part 1.1), I suggested that in the heightened context of the contemporary political climate in Scotland, the extent to which Somali people ‘had voice’ was implicated in multiple categories of citizenship and community. The testimonies of Somali people in this thesis certainly suggest that this has been the case. However, at the same time that these experiences have emphasised the association between ‘voice’, citizenship and community in representative and symbolic terms, they have also demonstrated that ‘voice’ only remains a meaningful category when it is grounded in a consideration in people’s lived experiences and social relationships.

These conclusions support the Glasgow Somali population's own observations about what makes a successful community: that though it is important to consider how the mechanisms of community work, and what they represent, 'voice' is best facilitated in the moments when people sit down, talk to each other, and listen.

Appendix A: Context of *Cadaan Studies*

In 2015, a group of Somali scholars based in North America began the *Cadaan Studies* movement, initially in reaction to the publication of a Somali journal, which had failed to include any Somali researchers from its board or first issue. However, the movement gained momentum following the comments of Markus Hoehne about the movement's reaction. His comments, and the movement's response are reproduced for context below.

A Collective Response to Dr. Markus Hoehne and the Somaliland Journal of African Studies

29 March 2015 at 22:43

It is with grave concern that we, the undersigned Somali academics, researchers, students, writers, activists, community members and our non-Somali academic and activist allies, write to you today.

We are deeply troubled by the extraordinary omission of Somali academics and researchers from the board of editors, international advisory board, and published authors of the newly launched academic journal Somaliland Journal of African Studies (SJAS). We are further disturbed by comments made publicly on Facebook by advisory board member and social anthropologist Dr. Markus Hoehne in response to and dismissive of the Somali-led critique of academic exclusion and Western dominance in SJAS and the field of Somali Studies more generally.

In its recent inaugural issue, the Somaliland Journal of African Studies described itself as an academic journal "covering African affairs at large, but with a particular focus on East Africa and the Horn." It also stated that the journal was the product of collaboration "with students and scholars of the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies of the University of Hargeisa." It was brought to our collective attention in late March that the editorial and advisory boards do not reflect this supposed partnership with UofH. Not a single Somali student or scholar from Hargeisa, the broader Somali region, or the vast Somali diaspora is represented in SJAS. Instead, the editorial and advisory board is made up of 9 Europe and US based academics - as well as two graduate student editors - and three Ethiopian academics affiliated with Addis Ababa University.

In response to this exclusion of Somali researchers and scholars from SJAS, there were conversations on Facebook between young Somali academics and activists on how to respond, and the announcement of a Twitter-based discussion on March 26th under the hashtag #CadaanStudies. "Cadaan" is the Somali term for whiteness, and the hashtag was intended to capture important questions of power, authority and knowledge production about the Somali territories, and how Somalis continue to be marginalized in academic and policy discussions concerning them.

It was in one of these Facebook conversation threads that Dr. Markus Hoehne entered in defense of SJAS and dismissal of this critique. It is necessary to quote his words at length:

Figure 1/3: Response to SJAS and Markus Hoehne posted by Saafia Aidid on Facebook behalf of the Cadaan Studies movement (Aidid, 2015a)

I did NOT come accross [sic] many younger Somalis who would qualify as serious SCHOLARS - not because they lack access to sources, but because they seem not to value scholarship as such. Sorry to say, but to become a successful political scientist, social anthropologist, sociologist or human geographer, you study many years without an economically promising end in sight. You have to work hard before you get out one piece of text and even then, you often get more criticism than praise. You certainly do not become rich quickly as a social scientist, at least if you have to pay your bills in Europe or Northamerica. Now, where are all the 'marginalised' Somalis who do not get their share in academia? I guess you would have to first find all the young Somalis who are willing to sit on their butt for 8 hours a day and read and write for months to get one piece of text out. Okay, before you 'crucify' me now for my neo-colonial racist male writing, I ADMIT that given the lack of good quality higher education in social sciences INSIDE Somalia, one cannot enter into a fair competition between cadaan iyo madow [black] scholars here. BUT, there are many young Somalis in UK, USA and continental Europe who have a chance to get a degree from a well-established university in social sciences and become master analysts of Somali and other affairs (where are Somali sociologists who work on issues of discrimination or inequality in the USA or Europe, where are Somali religious scholars who engage in the debate about Islam in Europe? Sometimes you have to look beyond your Somali navel). But in my life, I met only very FEW diaspora Somalis who seriously pursued such a career (in social sciences). So, your activism is good, but what you actually would have to do - instead of getting outraged at cadaan scholars, is to sit down and get your analysis out and criticise not cadaan for writing sth, but your own brothers and sisters for not writing better stuff!

He continued to argue back and forth with over 30 educated Somalis, stating "there is not enough good and serious scholarship in the form of articles and books coming from Somali social scientists," that he "did not see many young Somalis seriously engaging in social sciences," and demanded they prove their existence to him: "Please send me the references to articles and books written by young Somali social scientists that have been published in well-established journals and with reputable publishers."

When Hoehne was asked to leave the thread by many who felt patronized and attacked by his comments, he crudely responded in broken Somali translating to: "Fine. I will go. You and your friends can talk about a stupid white man who is colonizing you, but I think that when you are finished talking about colonialism, you will go back to your Somali tribalism."

Figure 2/3: Comments by Hoehne and further response from the movement (Aidid, 2015a)

In subsequent discussions on other Somali Facebook pages following the successful #CadaanStudies Twitter discussion, he continued to comment in incredibly divisive ways, questioning the authenticity of diaspora Somalis who participated in Twitter activism and reducing the critique of knowledge production and systemic power to one that pitted individual white against black, us (non-Somali Somali Studies scholars) versus them (Somalis, who he viewed as lacking the credentials and discipline to produce academic work and participate in the field). He positioned himself, a German anthropologist, as more in touch with Somali reality than the Somalis who were challenging him online, while continuing to argue that the conversations taking place online was not "real debate":

"You all seem to be in the diaspora. INSIDE Somalia, I have never encountered this type of flat reaction towards me. Some people hated me for certain opinions, many challenged me - but there was a real debate about THE MATTER, not flat accusations of racism and white supremacy. In my subjective opinion, Somalis in Somalia had a much more constructive and interesting way of debating than many of you (whoever 'you' exactly is) in the diaspora, who have so many means compared to your brothers and sisters who never left the motherland. Maybe you should get your equation right: If I am a white supremacist, you are a black supremacist compared to your brothers and sisters back in Somalia who have not all the high quality education and economic means you can access."

We are appalled by the words of Dr. Markus Hoehne, his lack of self-awareness regarding the seriousness and violence of his comments and thinking, and his inability and unwillingness to engage. We are concerned that these words should come from an academic who considers himself an expert on Somalis and has power in both the field of Somali Studies as well as policy about and within the Somali territories, evidenced by the decision to commission him for the project "Community Safety Forums & Community Police Dialogues in Somaliland, Puntland and South Central Somalia" by the Danish Demining Group and funding from the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

It is our collective belief that what Dr. Markus Hoehne's comments and the exclusionary Somaliland Journal of Somali Studies show us is the necessity and urgency of discussing and deconstructing issues of power and authority in Somali Studies, and thinking through how this has shaped academic knowledge production about Somalis historically and into the present. We are keenly aware that Somali Studies emerged alongside the colonization of the Somali territories, and that inextricably linked to the expansion of European power in the Horn of Africa was the production of cultural and historical information about Somalis. In the postcolonial present, the production of knowledge about the Horn of Africa remains largely in the hands of European and American academics and analysts, increasingly linked to the informational needs of neocolonialism and the War on Terror. There is too much at stake for our voices and concerns to be dismissed.

Figure 3/3: Comments by Hoehne and further response from the movement (Aidid, 2015a)

- Further discussion by members of the *Cadaan Studies* movement can be found in the following articles: (Aidid, 2015c, Mire, 2015a, Hassan, 2015)
- Aidid also separately describes the backlash she has since experienced since the beginning of the movement: (Aidid, 2015b, Farrah, 2016)
- *The Maandeeq* blog and podcast also provides further commentaries on topics related to the *Cadaan Studies* movement: themaandeeq.com
- Hoehne's response to the *Cadaan Studies* movements' argument is here: (Hoehne, 2015)

Appendix B: Somali population data

Year	1. Census population		2. ONS estimate by nationality	3. Total school pupils who speak Somali as a main home language			4. Total Somalis seeking asylum		
	a) Total Somalis by nationality	b) Somali speakers and % of total population	a) Total (Scotland)	a) Total (Scotland)	b) Glasgow and % of total	c) Area of Glasgow and % of total	a) Home Office figures for Scotland	b) GCC figures for Glasgow	c) GASC figures for Glasgow
2015				312					
2014				310	303 (97.7%)				
2013			2000 (+/- 2000)	286					
2012				273	268 (98.2%)	NE: 121 (45.1%) NW: 60 (22.4%) S: 87 (32.5%)			
2011	1591	1050 (65.9%)		274					
2010				251					
2009				258					
2008				246			250		
2007				205					
2006									
2005							471		
2004							556		
2003									533
2002									
2001	159							197	340

*Table 1: Compilation of data indicating Somali populations in Scotland (2001-2015)**

***Data has been compiled from a number of sources:**

1a) for Census 2011 data (population by nationality), Scottish Government (2014b); for Census 2001 (population by nationality), BBC (2005)

1b) for Census 2011 data (population by Somali language), Scottish Government (2014a)

2a) for ONS estimate (population by nationality), ONS (2013)

3a) for Somali language by School Pupil (Scotland), Scottish Government (2015b)

3b) for Somali language by pupil (Glasgow), Equality Unit (2015)

3c) for Somali language by Glasgow area, Baillot et al. (2014)

4a) for asylum seeking populations in Scotland by nationality (Somali), Home Office (2016)

4b) for asylum seeking populations in Glasgow (Somali), GCC (2003, p. 9)

4c) for asylum seeking populations in Glasgow (Somali), GASC figures, Wren (2004, p. 21)

Table 2: African population by nationality (Census 2011)

Nationality	Population in Scotland by nationality
Nigeria	9458
South Africa	10607
Ghana	1658
Zimbabwe	4666
Kenya	2743
Zambia	1637
Somalia	1591
Libya	1327
Egypt	1332
Total African:	46742

Appendix C: A Reflection

In my viva, my examiners and I had a lengthy and challenging discussion about decolonising practices and the role of whiteness in research. At the end of my viva, my external examiner, Professor Alison Phipps (University of Glasgow) read this poem for summary and reflection. With her permission and with my thanks, I reproduce it here to conclude this thesis.

*My name is Alison,
...and I am a recovering racist,*

But I was born with this addiction
because my ancestors were white
and the country I am from grew fat
in every imperial fight.
Money, privilege and power
come through the barrel of a gun.
That wasn't just in history
it's still how this is done.

The work which calls me loudly
towards your skins and eyes and tears
is the work which is intention
to assuage those birth-right fears.

So do not idolize my actions
do not praise my words as bold
do not look at the donations
or the papers that I hold.

The thoughts I have of charity
are just part of this addiction
inherited from a line
that is a long and bleached-out fiction.

I do not have to worry when my skin
is in a room
or on a train
or in a car
or in the immigration tomb.

I will be given space and money
and more time,
because I'm white,

because my ancestors were slave owners,
or slave drivers
and right.

While you my friends, my kindred
will be skinned another way,
flayed into diminishments
through ever greater punishments
and all those cruel admonishments.

The only proper meaning of the *white man's burden*.
is that for all my days commitment
will be to a healing labour.

on my death bed, in my dying
I will be a racist too.
But its shouldering the burden
that will lead to something new

not denial of what sticks to
every tone, or shade or pore
but the making of relationships
that brim with something more

something giving and forgiving
of the shame upon my skin
something real and raw and honest
that can live with history's sin.

At times our conversation
will make our skins dissolve
and around us through the laughter
a new world may revolve
when the tears are all that join us
when the skin gives way to bone.

And through the pain we'll love again
and call this earth our home.

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